

HAERE MAI E TE WHĀNAU, TENA KOUTOU KATOĀ, A KIA NOHO TE ARIKI KI A KOUTOU. WELCOME, FAMILY, GREETINGS TO YOU ALL. MAY THE LORD BE WITH YOU



HATO MERE OTAKI, PUKEKARAKA PANUI

Sunday, 1st February 2026, the 4th Sunday in
Ordinary Time Cycle A

Fr Simi's reflection: He began to teach them, saying: & quote; "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Mathew 5:2-3)

Christ's disciples was to teach, baptise, and welcome repentant sinners to God's Kingdom. Today, we welcome into our community of believers another whom God has called out of our midst to enter the presbyterate of Jesus Christ, the High Priest.

Welcome, Pa Hemi Ropata, SM. The Church is blessed to welcome a humble servant who responds daily to the Shepherd's call to follow Him and to shepherd with Him His precious lambs. Today, we join the Marist family of priests and religious to thank God with you and celebrate with you the saving presence in our midst of the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

As you begin your journey as a Marist priest, know that you have joined Brotherhood of weak and lowly men whom the Shepherd has chosen and ordained to bless the world with the saving presence of the High Priest who emptied Himself on the Cross to raise us all to the blessedness of being called children of God the Most High.

Welcome, Pa Hemi. With you comes the High Priest. With you, the Kingdom of Heaven has come. Nau mai haere mai, Pa Hemi. Fr. Beniata and I rejoice with even greater thanksgiving for our own ordinations, for we have gained a new brother in your own recent ordination. God's blessings know no end.

Today, we have from Matthew's gospel the image of the Son of God seated on a high mountain, gathering all of His people to Himself and teaching them. To this day, Christ continues to appear before us on that Holy Mountain of the Altar at Mass, teaching us and feeding us with His very own Flesh and Blood, Soul and Divinity. He continues to do this through His priests.

Today, I celebrate with God's people 25 years of being one of Christ's priests, acting with Him and in His Person, teaching His people and feeding His lambs. Today, I give thanks to God for Fr. Beniata, who also celebrates his 9th anniversary of sharing in Christ's own priesthood and counting among those chosen from among all who rejoice with even greater thanksgiving our own ordinations, for we have gained a new brother in your own recent ordination. God's blessing knows no end.

Priests, Office Administrator & Team Leaders

Fr Simi Volavola Fr Beni Bakatete	Parish Administrator Assistant Priest	pasimi.otaki@gmail.com pabenimsc.otaki@gmail.com
Stephanie Harris-Stevens	Office Administrator	pukekaraka1@gmail.com Ph 021 253 1080
Mike McAsey Phil McIntyre Mary Elizabeth Debbie McAsey	Ohu Whakahaere Ohu Manaaki Ohu Tiaki Ohu Kura Ohu Arotake Hine, Marae Contact	Ph 021 503 403 Ph 022 1030 534 Ph 021 595 695 Ph Ph 021 144 3804
Urutakai Cooper	Kura Principal, St Peter Chanel	urutakai@spc.school.nz Ph 06 364 8017.

This Sunday's Roster

1st Feb 2006	Proclaimers	Eucharistic Ministers	Greeters	Collectors	Linen for February
	Miha Maori	Miha Maori	To be advised	To be advised	Stephanie

The Main Church Cleaner this week is Donna Ryan and next week is Faye Hanna

Bank Account details for the following:

SAINTS MARY PARISH OF OTAKI in capital letters	The Society of St Vincent de Paul in New Zealand	Caritas
6-0821-0701736-00	03 - 1532 - 0028658 - 000	03 - 0518 - 0211216 - 003

Mass & Liturgy Times

Monday & Tuesday, 10 am:
Liturgy & Communion.

Wednesday - Friday 10 am Mass

Miha Maori on the first Sunday
of the month

Reconciliation by appointment,
contact email Fr Simi or Beni, or
Stephanie 021 253 1080 or
Adam, office administrator in
Levin 027 511 2474

Exposition held on the last
Saturday of the month, 9 am - 11
am, organised by the Marist Frs.

Our Website

<http://www.pukekaraka.com/>

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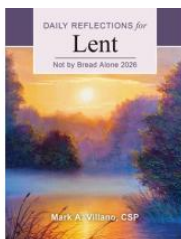
Local News

25
YEARS
ANNIVERSARY

Fr. Simi will celebrate his 25th year of
Ordination this Tuesday, January 27th. We congratulate
him and send our love to him on this very special
occasion. We will organise a celebration for him, watch
this space.



We welcome Hemi Ropata, newly
ordained Marist priest. Fr Hemi will celebrate Miha for
us on this Sunday. He is related to the local iwi through
the Ropata whānau, who have their marae across the
Ōtaki River at Ngāti Huia of Katihiku.



When Gerry and I were up in Napier
during the week, we stopped at Pleroma, and I got a
copy of Daily Reflections for Lent, Not by Bread Alone
2026, written by Fr Mark Villano, a Paulist priest from
the States. It is an opportunity to Journey with Jesus in
Lent. It is an easy read offering, scripture, a reflection,
meditation & prayer each day. It will be available at
Mass this week, and I will take orders if anyone is
interested. Cost will be \$9.90

Pope Leo's Quote for this week

"In this age, marked by so many seemingly interminable wars, by internal and social divisions that create mistrust and fear, St Francis continues to speak ...because his life points to the authentic source of peace...Peace with God, peace among human beings, and with creation are inseparable dimensions of a single call to universal reconciliation."

Pope Leo XIV – [letter to Ministers General of the Conference of the Franciscan family](#) 10 January 2026

I ask everyone to accompany this pilgrimage of reconciliation with the world that is our home and to help make it more beautiful, because that commitment has to do with our personal dignity and highest values. *Laudate Deum* #69

Action: In this Special Jubilee Year marking 800 years since St Francis death, what message does the life of St Francis, offer to you?

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK, AND THOSE WHO HAVE DIED RECENTLY

Please Pray for the Sick: Cathy Tia, Barbara Upham, Leonie Christian, Irene Mackle, Bryan Harold, Katrina Whittle, Jocelyn Bryant, Mark Bailey, Jill Randall, Tony Upham, Stephen Allport, Matthew Kerr, Ohole Taulanga, Fr David Orange, Geraldine Taylor, Kathleen Henry, Maurice Chaney, Rosalie Parsons, Fr David Gledhill and any parishioners who currently have Flu or COVID.

May they feel the love of the Lord and his comfort, gaining strength from him, during this time.



Okioki I runga I te rangimarie

– We remember those who have died:

Rex Begley 21.1.26

Fr Tony Pitt, MSM 20.1.26

Bernard Story, 16.1.26

Bro Doug Darwick 12.1.25

John Jones 22.12.25

Rolly Raureti 18.12.26

“I have gone and prepared you a place, I shall return to take you with me; so that where I am, you may be too.” **May they rest in Peace**

FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE

The New Zealand Catholic Medical Association provides community, support and chaplaincy for those involved in health care in Aotearoa. The association welcomes doctors, nurses, midwives, carers, pharmacists, physiotherapists, psychologists, dentists, health administrators, counsellors, social workers, chaplains, lawyers, and anyone in allied roles. The next nationwide event is a retreat and seminar at the St Francis Friary & Retreat Centre, Auckland on 20 and 21 March. For more information or to register, visit <https://bit.ly/NZCMA2026> or email newzealandcatholicmedical@gmail.com

Save the Date - St Valentine's Day

Mass 2026: Saturday, 14 February 2026, Mass at 5.30 pm, Sacred Heart Cathedral in Hill Street - a special celebration for married couples.

The Archdiocesan Marriage Preparation – Love is a Decision & Commit

- online registration available on the Archdiocesan website. Next course, consecutive **Sundays 1 & 8 March** 10.00 am-4.00 pm held at St Catherine's College, Kilbirnie. Register early (couples attend both Sundays together in person). See the Archdiocese's website for information about getting married overseas and the papers required. Any queries, contact: marriage@cadw.nz

Ongoing information

Lending each other a helping hand: At Pukekaraka, we can help if you need assistance with transport to Mass or if you need extra support because you are sick or housebound. Please contact Jill Watson at 021 127 4072 or pldjwatson@gmail.com to see how we may be able to support you.

Notices for the newsletter: Please send to Pukekaraka1@gmail.com before Thursday at 9 am each week to meet the deadline for Friday's newsletter. Thank you.

Meetings in the Faith Room: Please book your meetings by placing them on the calendar on the Faith Room door and then text or send an email to Stephanie so we don't double up, and she knows who is coming into the office. Thank you. email pukekaraka1@gmail.com or text 021 253 1080



Safeguarding: Is about promoting an environment within our faith community which respects and acknowledges the dignity of everyone, and where people feel valued and safe. If you have any concerns, please contact a member of the team - Paul Bayliss, Phil McIntyre & Stephanie. More information is on our notice board.

The Talitha Kum Intercessory Prayer Group meets on the last Sunday of each month at Pius X Church, 64 Te Pene Avenue, Titahiā. The next meeting will be on Sunday 22nd February 2026 from 2pm to 4.15pm. The focus intention is against the scourge of Human Trafficking and slavery in an atmosphere of praise and worship with and prayer.

All are welcome to gather with us in the Lord's name.

If you feel so moved, please come with prayer or a scripture to share with the gathering.

Refreshments provided.

Stephen and Judy Bailey (0211832445)

Safety & Health Matters

If you have any concerns you have about the safety & health of the church buildings or property to our attention. Contact Stephanie at 021 253 1080 or send an email to her.

