OUR LADY OF THE PLAINS PARISH

SELWYN

Incorporating the churches of: St Joseph's, Darfield: St John the Evangelist, Leeston, St Patrick's, Lincoln and including parishioners from the Rolleston area.

Parish Contacts

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Parish Priest: Fr Brian Fennessy
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Assistant: Fr Chris Orr
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Office Hours: Wed & Fri 9.00am-1pm

Pastoral Assistant: Brigid McIndoe
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Parish Safeguarding Officer
Sophia Tionko -
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https://selwyncatholic.nz/

https://www.facebook.com/selwyncatholicparish

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Year A

22 March 2026

Readings

Ezekiel 37:12-14

Romans 8:8-11

John 11:1-45

WEEKEND MASSES

Lincoln: Saturday Vigil - 5.30pm
Sunday - 8.30am
Darfield: Sunday – 8.30 am (Summer)
9.00 am (Winter)
Leeston: Sunday - 10.00am
Rolleston: Sunday 11.00am

Weekday Masses this week:
Lincoln: Tuesday, Friday: 9.00am

Leeston: Wednesday 5.30pm
Darfield: Thursday 10.00am
Akaroa: NIL

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:
Friday after Mass until Midday

Reconciliation: Saturday 10.00am at Lincoln

A Funeral Mass will replace the advertised mass in the same church.

The Christchurch Diocesan Website: https://doc.nz/.

LENT

Stations of the Cross: this is a good traditional devotion for Lent.
Lincoln: Fridays during Lent, 7.00pm.
Leeston: Sundays, 9.40am, before Sunday mass.
Darfield: Wednesday, 11.00am.

***Charitas* Lenten Appeal:** there are Giving Envelopes for donations to the *Caritas* Lenten Appeal in the porches of the churches - or just write your name/number on an envelope and place in the Collection Basket. Alternatively, you may make a deposit in the *Charitas* Bank Account via the website: https://www.caritas.org.nz/ways-to-give
Money from the Lenten *Caritas Appeal* goes towards the Catholic Church's Relief and Development Programmes.

Caritas Lenten Webinar Series: parishioners are invited to take part in the Lent Webinar Series, a 6-week national online journey with New Zealand's Catholic Bishops. Each session includes guided reflection, insights from Catholic social teaching, and moments for quiet contemplation as we prepare our hearts for Easter. This week, Bishop Michael Gielen will be reflecting on 'The Raising of Lazarus' - on Wednesday 25 March. To register, visit www.caritas.org.nz/lent-webinars

Lenten Reconciliation:
Darfield: Sunday 22 March, 7.00pm

Youth Led Mass: Rolleston, this Sunday, 22 March, 11.00am, followed by BBQ.

This weekend the **Candidates in the Journey to Faith Programme** will be presented at masses for their Fourth Scrutiny.

No Akaroa Mass this Wednesday, 25 March - as the priests of the Diocese have a Meeting.

There will be **NO Lincoln mass this Thursday, 26 March**.

RIP: Recently deceased; Kathleen McMahon (Leeston); Melva Stobie (Matamata)

OUR LADY OF THE PLAINS - EASTER SERVICES

Palm Sunday: next Sunday, 29 March – begins ***'Holy Week'***.
We will commence masses outside with the Blessing of the Palms.

Mass of the Holy Oils (Chrism Mass): Monday 30 March, 5.30pm, at St Mary's Pro-Cathedral.
At this mass Bishop Michael will bless the Holy Oils that will be used within Parishes during the following year.

Holy Thursday: Mass of the Lord's Supper (after mass, the Blessed Eucharist is placedoin the Altar of Repose – there will be a 30-minute period of prayer in front of the Altar of Repose after mass.
Lincoln: St Patrick's, 7.00pm
Darfield: St Joseph's, 7.00pm

Good Friday Ecumenical Walk:
Leeston: Commence @ Anderson Square (War Memorial), 10.00am.
There will be 7 Stations. End Location: Life Church; followed by Morning Tea.
Lincoln: Gathering at St Stephen's Anglican Church, 9:30am & Processing to Lincoln Baptist Church. Followed by Reflections on the Symbols of the Crucifixion & Hot Cross buns.

Good Friday: Commemoration of the Lord's Passion (There is a Collection for the Holy Places at the Good Friday Commemorations – this Appeal supports the shrines that the Catholic Church has responsibility for in the Holy Land).
Leeston: St John the Evangelist, midday
Darfield: St Joseph's, 3.00pm
Rolleston: Rolleston Primary School Hall (11 Tennyson Street), 3.00pm

EASTER VIGIL – Saturday 4 April
Lincoln: St Patrick's, 7.30pm (**NO** 5.30pm mass) The Candidates in the 'Journey to Faith Programme' will be Baptised of Received into the Catholic Church during the Vigil.

Easter Sunday ~ Mass of the Lord's Resurrection
Lincoln: St Patrick's, 8.30am
Darfield: St Joseph's, 9.00am
Leeston: St John the Evangelist, 10.00am
Rolleston: School Hall, 11.00am, (11 Tennyson Street)

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Akaroa: Fr Michael Mahoney will be in residence at Akaroa for 'Holy Week'.
He will celebrate Palm Sunday Mass and the Easter Sunday Mass, 9.30am.
Also:
Wednesday 1 April: Anointing Mass, 10.00am.
Holy Thursday, 2 April: Mass of the Lord's Supper, 7.00pm.
(Sacrament of Reconciliation available prior to Mass starting at 6:15pm).
Good Friday, 3 April: Commemoration of the Lord's Passion, 3.00pm.
Easter Vigil, Holy Saturday, 4 April, 7.00pm.

First Holy Communion Programme: Third Parents' Meeting next Sunday,29 March.
Over the next few months, the St Patrick's 8.30am Sunday mass will be at capacity.
Programme Coordinator: Brigid McIndoe, pastoralassistantselwyn@gmail.com ;
Phone: 021 08176358

'Food for Faith' Lenten Reflections: visit www.foodforfaith.org.nz and sign up to receive daily email encouragements from Fr. John O'Connor.

Daylight Saving ends on Easter Sunday Morning - Darfield Sunday mass will be at 9.00am on Easter Sunday.

There are copies of **'Grapevine'** at church entrances – it is a Christian magazine. Please take a copy.

Fundraising Account: a 'Selwyn Parish Fundraising Bank Account' has been established.
This Account will enable all fundraising funds to be kept separate.
The new Fundraising Account Number is:
The Roman Catholic Diocese of Christchurch - The Catholic Parish of Selwyn: 03-1592-0207180-022

Leeston Container: The container is leaking and is not fulfilling a purpose. There is very little of value in the container. However, we need a parishioner who is willing to **store the church-bell** in a shed/garage. This is part of Leeston's heritage.
Other items in the container are chairs and crockery … that have been there for 15 years.
If anyone would like a chair ... please give a donation towards the Building Fund.

Right to Life – AGM - Members and supporters are invited to attend the AGM of *Right to Life New Zealand Inc*, on Friday 17 April, 7.00pm, @ Assisi Lounge, St Marys Pro-Cathedral; Guest Speaker - Brian Whitaker.

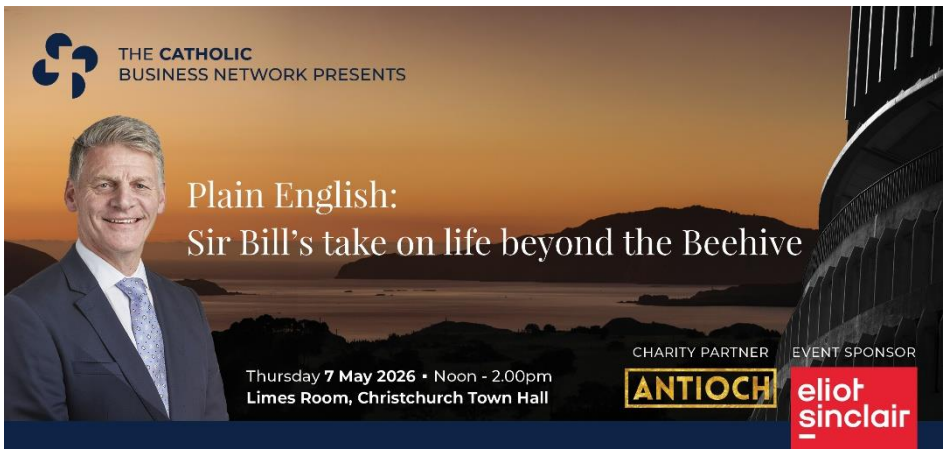
Women's Christian Convention: Biblical Theology Workshop, @ Lincoln Event Centre, Saturday 2 May, 9.00am- 4.15pm. Morning Tea & lunch provided. Facilitated by Nacy Gurthie. There is an Invitation to all Churches.
Info & Registration: https://womensconvention.nz/share/
There are flyers @ the church entrance for programme & cost.

Leeston Co-Operating Parish- Invitation to Opening of their new hall extension: at St David's Church, located at 75 High Street, Leeston.
The celebration will take place on **Sunday, 26 April,** beginning with a special service at 11.00 am, followed by morning tea.
The Parish wrote that they would be delighted to have us join us for this long-awaited and joyful occasion, as they give thanks for the improved facilities that will serve both our congregation and wider community.

Please RSVP by email by Monday, 20 April, if you are able to attend to Rev Willem A van der Walt; email: wavdwalt@gmail.com ; Mobile: 027 316 9368.
Fr Brian will attend, plus any other St John the Evangelist parishioners - I think we can finish mass at 10.45am on that day ….by having a short homily.

Internation Women's Day Breakfast at Robert Harris, Lincoln.

Catholic Business Network: will feature guest speaker Rt Hon Sir Bill English on 'life beyond the Beehive'.
The event will bring together business leaders, professionals and executives from across the diocese for an afternoon of connection and faith-filled conversation.
Thursday 7 May, midday - 2.00pm @ Limes Room, Christchurch Town Hall.
Register: https://www.cbn.nz/



CBS Music: Bach's St John Passion will be performed on Good Friday @ 8.00pm @ St Mary's Pro-Cathedral. Written for Good Friday, in 1724, the Passion is a compact and intensely dramatic setting of St John's description of Christ's last hours.

Divine Mercy Sunday: @ St Mary's Pro-Cathedral, Sunday 12 April, 2.45pm, with confessions from 1.30pm. Book sales and refreshments to follow. Note: no parking on pro-cathedral grounds until after 2pm. Information, Pat: 359 2087.

Men's Breakfast: To be held at the Pantry Cafe, Eastfield Drive Shopping complex, Rosemerryn, at 8am, 11 April. Names will be taken in the near future. Phone Ray Morgan, 366 9795; leave a message.

Letter from the Bishops of New Zealand about the *Caritas Lenta Appeal*

Christian Charity: An invitation from the Bishops of New Zealand

Every year in this holy season, the New Zealand Bishops asks *Caritas* NZ to run a fundraising campaign on their behalf – the Bishops' Lent Appeal.
The theme for the Lent appeal in 2026 is *'Hear the Voice, Answer the Call'*. During this time, and especially as we near Easter, we invite you to consider how you can hear the voice of those in need and answer the call to Christian charity.
Our world is becoming increasingly wrought by conflict and division. We see great suffering in places like Ukraine, Gaza, Israel, South Sudan and, most recently, in Iran.
We watch this happening as we prepare to meditate on the great suffering that Jesus endured on Good Friday, and with the recent echoes of Scripture – "whatever you did for the least of these, you did for me" – urging us to be mindful of those who are in need.
Supporting the work of *Caritas*, the second-largest humanitarian organisation in the world, is a chance to tangibly respond to those ruptures across the globe. Each year, the Bishops' Lent Appeal is the best way to fund *Caritas'* work – supporting vulnerable communities globally.
As *Caritas'* leadership explained at the start of the Lent Appeal, this global instability, along with the pain caused by displacement, humanitarian crises and the impacts of climate change, is increasing the significant strain that many communities were already facing.
As we pointed out in our pastoral letter last November on the World Day of the Poor, Christian charity – which can be lived out through almsgiving, among other practices – is an important part of a life lived in the spirit of the Gospel.
It is an invitation for people to be mindful of the needs of those who are vulnerable and an invitation to be generous, according to their own circumstances.
The money raised in this year's appeal will support many projects across the world, but one focus is addressing the dire situation facing Rohingya refugee families in Bangladesh. More than 1.3 million Rohingya are stuck in camps with few rights and constant threats of violence, trafficking and exploitation.
Many of us know little, if anything, of this crisis, but *Caritas* is making a difference to the lives of people in those camps, for whom hope can be elusive.
Every year, individuals and parishes across New Zealand are very generous in supporting this appeal. We hope that this will continue in this Lenten season.
We invite you, during this time of preparation, prayer and almsgiving, to take the time to discern how you can contribute to this campaign. We then encourage you to donate to the Bishops' Lent Appeal 2026 at www.caritas.org.nz/lent or by using the envelopes provided at Mass.
This act of generosity will make a difference – to those *Caritas* serves near and far, yes, but also within you, as you live out the spirit of Christian charity.
In Christ,
✠ Stephen Lowe, Bishop of Auckland; ✠ Michael Dooley, Bishop of Dunedin;
✠ Paul Martin SM, Archbishop of Wellington; ✠ Michael Gielen, Bishop of Christchurch;
✠ John Adams, Bishop of Palmerston North; ✠ Richard Laurenson, Bishop of Hamilton;