



Stella Maris Parish

Catholic Parish of Christchurch Diocese

739 Ferry Road, Woolston, PO Box 19625, Christchurch 8241

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www.stellamarisparish.org.nz

OUR PARISH VISION:

Our Stella Maris Parish will grow an inclusive welcoming faith community which supports one another to deepen our relationship with Jesus Christ and by our actions and words, encourage others to join our faith journey.

15th March 2026—Fourth Sunday of Lent —Yr A

LIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF LENT: A LAETARE JOURNEY

Laetare Sunday—the Fourth Sunday of Lent—is often called the “*smile in the middle of Lent.*” While the rest of Lent carries a more penitential and subdued spirit, Laetare Sunday stands out as a moment of encouragement, hope, and anticipation. The very name “Laetare” comes from the Latin *rejoice*, taken from the Entrance Antiphon:

“Rejoice, Jerusalem... be joyful, all who were in mourning.”

This Sunday reminds us that our Lenten journey is not meant to crush us but to lead us toward the joy of Easter. It’s a spiritual breather, a reminder that God’s grace is already at work in us even as we struggle, repent, and grow.

The readings of this Sunday fit this theme perfectly. God chooses David—a surprising choice, showing that grace works in hidden ways. Paul tells us we once were darkness but now are light. And Jesus opens the eyes of the man born blind, revealing that God’s glory shines most brightly in places the world overlooks.

Laetare Sunday therefore announces: *Light is coming. Joy is near. God is at work. Keep going.* It is the Church’s way of saying, “Don’t be discouraged - Easter is on the horizon.”

As we rejoice in the hopeful tone of Laetare Sunday, it is also the perfect moment to refocus our hearts on the deeper purpose of these forty days. In that spirit, a gentle but important reminder: our Lenten Mission will be held from Tuesday 17 to Thursday 19 at 6.30 pm in St. Anne's Church. These evenings of grace will offer us a powerful three-day reflection on “*The Suffering Servant*” from Isaiah (Chapter 53). You are warmly invited to join these days of grace and renewal.

Fr. Vincent Barboza

Assistant Priest



LENTEN RECONCILIATION RITE II

Friday 20th March at 7.00pm at St Annes’ Church, Woolston.

The Holy Church asks the faithful to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation at least once a year during the time of Lent. Lenten reconciliation is an integral part of the Lenten season to celebrate Easter. There will be 5 Priests to assist with Reconciliation. All welcome.



Next Sunday, 22nd March 2026, at St Anne’s Church,
9:30am—10:15am—Come early for Mass and join us.

PARISH INFORMATION:

MASS CENTRES:

Woolston: St Anne’s,
739 Ferry Rd.

Sumner: Our Lady Star of the Sea,
42 Dryden St.

New Brighton: St Mary’s,
116 Lonsdale St.

Diamond Harbour: St Andrew’s,
85 Marine Dr.

WEEKEND MASS TIMES (ENGLISH):

Woolston: Saturday Vigil 6:00pm
Sunday 10:30am

Sumner: Sunday 9:00am

New Brighton: Sunday 10:30am

Diamond Harbour: 1st Sunday 5:30pm

Samoan Mass Times:

Woolston: 1st Sunday 12:30pm

New Brighton: 2nd Sunday 12:30pm

Tongan Mass Time:

Woolston: 2nd Sunday 3:30pm

WEEKDAY MASS TIMES:

Woolston: Tues, Wed & Thurs: 9:15am
Friday 12:00pm

Sumner: Thursday 9:15am

New Brighton: Thursday 11:15am

A Funeral Mass replaces the week-day Mass.

RECONCILIATION:

Woolston: Friday 11:15am-11:45am
Saturday 10:30am-11:00am

New Brighton: After Sunday Mass

Sumner: After Thursday Mass

Diamond Harbour: After Sunday Mass

PARISH CONTACTS:

Parish Priest:

Fr Job Thyikalamuriyil

Phone: 022 682 9886

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Assistant Priest:

Father Paulo Filoialii

Phone: 027 955 7989

Assistant Priest:

Fr Vincent Barboza

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Office Administrator

Joseph Arackal

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parish@stellamarisparish.org.nz

Pastoral Worker: - Janette Bradbrook

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janette@stellamarisparish.org.nz

Finance Administrator:

accounts@stellamarisparish.org.nz

Local Safeguarding representative

Makarita Fido-Isaako

Phone: 021 082 56819

volunteer@stellamarisparish.org.nz

PARISH NOTICES:

Sunday, 15th March 2026—Fourth Sunday of Lent — Yr A

1 Samuel 16:1,6-7, 10-13

Ephesians 5:8-14

John 9:1-41

Psalm Response: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

LENTEN MISSION — THE SUFFERING SERVANT

As we journey through this holy season of Lent, you are invited to a three-day spiritual reflection on *“The Suffering Servant”* based on the moving prophecy in **Isaiah 53**.

Dates: 17th, 18th & 19th March

Time: 6:30 pm each evening

Venue: St. Anne’s Church, Woolston, Christchurch

Programme: Mass, Praise & Worship, Talk, and Adoration

Preacher: Fr. Vincent Barboza

DURING LENT

We are asked to undertake some penitential practices.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

There is no ‘Stations of the Cross’ this Friday due to Lenten Mission.

MASS OF ANOINTING- ALL WELCOME

St Mary’s, New Brighton: Thursday 19th March at 11.15am

St Anne’s, Woolston: Friday 27th March at 12.00pm

ALPHA STARTS APRIL 8TH!

This is a powerful opportunity to strengthen your own faith and fulfil our mission to evangelize by inviting neighbours, friends, and family to explore life’s big questions in a warm, open environment. Whether they are lifelong believers or curious sceptics, your simple invitation can be the light that helps someone find their way home to Christ. Let’s be bold in our faith, spread the word throughout our community, and grow together as we welcome everyone to the table this April.



THIS FINANCIAL YEAR 2025-2026 is coming to an end. There are a few members in the planned givers list who have overlooked to contribute any amount after they have signed up. Those of you who are not in the planned giving can make a one-off payment to our parish account by putting your phone number as the reference number to contact you and give you a tax receipt. Under NZ Tax Law you are able to claim a rebate of 1/3rd of donations back from Inland Revenue. Please consider contributing money into your account before the end of the financial year. **Our Parish Account details are: Catholic Parish East, 03-1592-0207535-020.**

NEW SETS OF PLANNED GIVING ENVELOPES for the year 2026-2027 are kept in the foyer in all three Mass centres in the alphabetical order of their surname. The Givers in the Planned giving may take their envelopes please.

SHORT-TERM RENTAL ACCOMMODATION:

David and Fiona Piccolo, along with their seven children (ages 5–16), will be returning to our parish this June and July to guide a period of evangelisation and ‘Neo Catechumenal way of life’ catechesis. They are currently seeking short-term rental accommodation from 1 June to 7 August 2026. If you know of an available suitable home (3 bedrooms or more, either furnished or unfurnished) please contact Aaron and Annamaria O’Sullivan at 021 0882 3942 or email David directly at david.piccolo79@gmail.com

CITY TO SURF AT NEW BRIGHTON:

Parishioners at New Brighton need to know that the Sunday 15th March is the City to Surf and access to Lonsdale Street will be limited, buses will be parked along the Street. Keyes Rd and New Brighton Road will be closed from 9am, access via Marine Parade may be possible but be aware that road works are in place. It is suggested that the main access will be via Pages Road then Hawke Street and Shaw Ave. School gate will be open until 10.30am for the parishioners to park car. I encourage few parishioners to come early with high viz to reserve the parish/school car park for those who come to 10.30am Mass.

THE GRANDPARENT PRAYER MEETING for March is on **Sunday, 22nd March at 3 pm at St Mary’s New Brighton church hall**. Please join to pray for our children and grandchildren. Come early for a ‘cuppa’ before we start. Contact: Sandie on 021 180 4445 for details.

CHARITAS LENTEN APPEAL: There are Giving Envelopes for donations to the Caritas Lenten Appeal in the porches of the churches. Alternatively, you may make a deposit in the Caritas 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.

STELLA MARIS PARISH OFFICE: 116 Lonsdale Street, New Brighton

PARISH OFFICE OPEN HOURS: Tuesday 2.00pm to 4.00pm

Wednesday 8.30am to 4.00pm, Thursday 9.00am to 4.00pm, Friday 8:30am to 4.00pm

Stella Maris Parish Schools

Aranui—St James

Principal: Rose Firth-Scott

Phone: 03 982-0009

principal@stjames.school.nz

New Brighton—New Brighton Catholic

Principal: Deb Daines

Phone: 03 388 7982

office@nbc.school.nz

Sumner—Our Lady Star of the Sea

Principal: Adele Greig

Phone: 03 326 5315

principal@ourladystar.school.nz

Woolston—St Anne’s

Principal: Dallas Wichman

Phone: 03 384 3073

principal@stannes.co.nz