

Mercy Parish-Whānau Aroha

The Ascension of the Lord Year A

17th May 2026

What Catholic values are visible in this community?
(What values are not visible?)

Parish Office:

Lynlea Forbes

email: mercy.parish@xtra.co.nz

Address:

24 Forbury Road, Dunedin 9012;

Phone 4558933

Tues, Wed, Thurs & Fri 9am-2pm

Parish Priest:

Fr Michael Hishon,

email: mgtph62@gmail.com

Ph 0274170127

Assistant Priest:

Fr Joseph Nguyen,

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Ph 0211099230

Trinity Catholic College Chaplain

Fr Vaughan Hook,

email: fatherhook@trinity.school.nz

Alpha Co-Ordinator:

Liz Rose

Email: roseliz8555@yahoo.com

Sick & Housebound Co-Ordinator:

Adrienne Ryan

Ph 4761520 or phone the Parish Office

Mass Times:

Mercy Parish

32 Macandrew Road, Dunedin

Saturday Vigil 6.00 pm

Sunday 9.30 am & 11.00 am

Weekday Masses

Mercy Chapel - Mon to Thurs - 9am

Tuesday - 12.10 pm

Thursday - 6.00 pm

School Masses

St Bernadettes Wed 27th May @ 11.10

St Brigid's Thurs 29th May @ 10.30

Reconciliation

11.30-12 noon Saturday

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament:

11.00am -12 noon First Saturday of the month in the Basilica.

Samoan Mass

172 Corstorphine Road

1st Sunday of the Month -11.00am

Broad Bay Queen Mary of Peace

721A Portobello Road

3rd Sunday of the Month -11.00am

Filipino Mass

4th Sunday of the month - 6.00pm

Online Mass can be viewed either on the Mercy Parish Webpage (mercyparishwhanauaroha), or the Mercy Parish facebook.

The Ascension

There is a story that when Jesus ascended to heaven after his death and resurrection the Archangel Gabriel was surprised to see him back so soon. Thirty-three years is not a long time, especially when you think about the importance of the task he had been given to do on earth, by his Father in Heaven.

"Back so soon?" Gabriel asked Jesus. "Well, I would have stayed longer by they crucified me," Jesus replied. "Oh, so they crucified you", said Gabriel. "That means you failed then."

"Not necessarily", said Jesus. "You see, I called together a little group of disciples. They will carry on my work." "And what if they should fail?", asked Gabriel.

"I have no other plans," said Jesus.

We are Jesus' witnesses before the world. It's a daunting task but a great privilege too. When we witness the truth, justice and love and peace we are witnessing to Jesus.

The way to witness to truth is to live truthfully.

The way to witness to justice, is to act fairly in all one's dealings with others.

The way to love is to act lovingly towards others.

And the way to witness to peace is to live in peace with others.

We can draw encouragement from what Saint Theresa of Calcutta said,

"I don't pray for success; I pray that I may be a faithful witness."

For surely the Ascension does not represent Jesus removal from the earth, but his constant presence everywhere on earth. Through his Spirit forever abiding amongst those who believe.

Fr Michael

Volunteers Needed Friday Community Meal

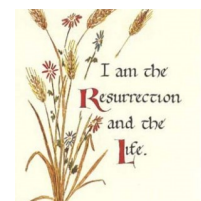
We are looking for friendly and reliable volunteers to join our team supporting the weekly community meal held on Fridays (excluding school and public holidays). If you're interested in giving back, this is a wonderful opportunity to be part of a welcoming group helping with meal preparation, service, and clean-up. No experience is necessary—just a willingness to lend a hand and work as part of a team. If you would like to get involved or learn more, please contact the parish office on 4558933.

We Prayerfully remember those who have died recently:

Janette Lydiate

and for those who have anniversaries at this time:

Evangeline & Antonio Ranosa



Reflections on the First Anniversary of the Election of Pope Leo XIV:

The strength of the weak and the voice of the voiceless are stronger than power

A year ago, on May 8, the 267th Bishop of Rome was elected. To the surprise of many of us, it was the Augustinian friar Robert Francis Prevost who stepped onto the loggia of St. Peter's Basilica.

After the intuitive and prophetically powerful actions of Pope Francis, the gestures of Leo XIV were far more restrained, and it took months before we began to understand, through his choice of name referring to the pope of *Rerum novarum*, the style and pastoral character of the Holy Father.

At first, many praised his balance and reserve, and while the world indeed sees a pope who is careful in his formulations and moderate in his gestures, his speeches and dialogues increasingly present the great themes with greater force—even more decisively than Pope Francis.

Unarmed and Disarming Peace

Among these, Pope Leo's strongest message concerns peace; it is built around the theme of peace. Already from the loggia, he greeted the crowd gathered in St. Peter's Square with the words: "Peace be with you!" In October 2025, at the international peace meeting *Osare la pace*—in the spirit of Assisi—nearly three hundred religious leaders gathered in Rome to promote friendship and peace. At the closing event of the three-day meeting, the Holy Father spoke with such force in favor of peace that the intensity and determination of his speech recalled the words of Pope Paul VI at the United Nations General Assembly in New York in 1965: "No more war! Never again war!" Leo's words—"Basta! Basta! – Enough! Enough!"—pierce our conscience as a firm and loud cry.

In his first address after his election, he spoke of an unarmed and disarming peace, and on May 16, 2025, before ambassadors accredited to the Holy See, he explained that this peace is not merely a ceasefire, but the peace of the risen Christ, who says: "My peace I give you" (Jn 14:27). The peace of the Risen One is *shalom*, a complete peace, far more than the silence of weapons—it is the tranquility of the whole person in all relationships. As the Pope teaches, this peace is "an active, inclusive gift that concerns all of us regardless of cultural background or religious affiliation and calls us to struggle." Peace is active; it demands engagement and courage from us.

This courage was evident in the exchange between Pope Leo XIV and Donald J. Trump, President of the United States. While Trump accused the Pope of not understanding foreign policy when calling for peace—even in places like Iran, where Trump argued weapons were necessary—the Pope responded wisely: "I am not a politician; I speak about the Gospel." The standard of the Gospel is far higher than daily political maneuvering. In this spirit, we must never abandon the possibility of resolving conflicts through diplomacy and dialogue.

Those who still argue for the possibility of war in the name of the valid but increasingly outdated theory of the "just war" have not yet understood the papal message: that friendship creates peace. This is not empty pacifism but a change of mentality, a conversion, and a lived reality of the Gospel. This applies even in international contexts. Commitment to peace is not naivety but the only full reality—the Gospel proposal.

On April 16, in Bamenda, Cameroon, while praising the perseverance of the local community in times of suffering, he appeared as a herald of peace: "I came to proclaim peace, yet I see that you proclaim peace to me and to the whole world." Quoting Isaiah, he said: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the one who brings good news, who proclaims peace..." (Is 52:7). Observing the complexity of his preaching, we see that peace (and friendship) is a theme acceptable to all, regardless of culture or religion. Friendship builds bridges and relationships, bringing peace, while the universal moral authority of the Bishop of Rome is also expressed in this proclamation. Meanwhile, the messianic peace (cf. Isaiah), the peace of the Risen One, quietly enters and begins to work in the background, grounding the entire process. The Gospel enters history.

In a similar way, we must evaluate the condemnation of the death penalty, which the Pope rejected with full determination in a video message on April 24. This is not about opposing traditional arguments in favor of the death penalty to the rejection by Popes Francis and Leo. It is not the abolition of old teaching, but its fulfillment in love. Pope Leo affirms: "The dignity of the person is not lost even after the commission of the most serious crimes." Those who live according to the Gospel will find ways of proportionate punishment without denying human life and dignity.

The Good News of Jesus and the Kingdom of God

His first apostolic exhortation, *Dilexi te*, Pope Leo focuses on the poor and summarizes the teaching of Pope Francis within a broad horizon. The poor are not merely individuals to be helped, but the sacramental presence of the Lord—quoting St. Augustine (no. 44). This approach is therefore not merely a humanistic idea. Leo emphasizes that in the poor, the poor Christ comes among us. When we turn toward the poor, Jesus enters our lives through and within them.

“Through your work, your efforts to change unjust social structures, or your simple heartfelt gestures expressing closeness and support, the poor will come to realize that Jesus’ words, ‘I have loved you’ (Rev 3:9), are addressed personally to each of them” (*Dilexi te*, no. 121).

Just like peace, the theme of the poor would be mere social moralizing without its Gospel foundation. Pope Leo teaches (*Dilexi te*, no. 59) that since apostolic times, the Church has seen the liberation of the oppressed as a sign of the Kingdom of God. For Jesus came to bring good news to the poor (Lk 4:18). Going beyond all forms of humanism and philanthropy, the theme of the poor leads us to Jesus himself. Those who go to the poor experience that they receive far more than they give, and realize that we do not go to them primarily to do good or to convert, but so that they may do good to us and convert us. Leo thus places the question of the poor firmly on a Christ-centered horizon.

In representing Christian values, sexual ethics and the defense of life from conception to natural death must be upheld alongside human dignity, the plight of the poor, refugees, and marginalized people, as well as the promotion of peace, care for creation, and the fight against structural social sins.

On January 9, addressing the diplomatic corps accredited to the Holy See, he strongly emphasized the importance of dialogue, international law, and multilateralism. He pointed out that escalating conflicts reveal the weakness of supranational institutions and cooperation. In that speech, he praised the significance of the United Nations and encouraged the restoration of its authority. Thus, support for traditional multilateral institutions plays an important role in his moral priorities.

Pope Leo therefore seeks to develop a holistic vision in moral teaching, which, as he says, must not retreat behind the ramparts of doctrine. He has become the spokesperson of the voiceless, representing hundreds of millions and calling them to form a new unity.

At a prayer vigil for peace in Rome on April 11, he said: “Let us unite the moral and spiritual strength of millions, billions of people—men and women, young and old—who believe in peace today, who choose peace, who heal wounds and repair the harmful consequences of the madness of war.” In his Easter message, he declared: “Jesus passed through death to give us life and peace.” And a few days ago, responding to further criticism, he said: “Enough of displays of power, for the strength of the weak and the voice of the voiceless are stronger than this power.”

God bless our Holy Father, the Vicar of Christ!

Wellington, May 8th, 2026

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gábor Pintér". To the left of the first letter 'G' is a small cross symbol.

✠ Gábor Pintér Apostolic Nuncio

Laudato Si' week (17-24 May) at Mercy

to celebrate how God's earth sustains and provides for all of us, and to also support [Pope Leo's prayer](#) intention for May (**that everyone might have food**) we are inviting people to bring along an item for the SVDP foodbank this coming week. Thank you.

FORMER SCOUT GROUPS IN OUR PARISH. A Catholic scout leader is wanting help to obtain a scarf and name badge of two former scout groups in our parish: St Bernadette's in Forbury and St Patrick's in South Dunedin. This is part of a project to record the history of Catholic-sponsored scout groups in NZ. Sewn on the scarves would have been the badge used by Catholic scout groups – see image alongside. If you can help, please contact Edmund le Grelle, Ph 021 2619369 or edmund@legrelle.co.nz

CARING FOR CREATION: THE CRY OF THE EARTH AND THE POOR

FOOD RESILIENCE IN DUNEDIN – Panel Discussion (Koha).

How can we feed everyone? The overshoot of planetary boundaries results in fragile social and ecological stability; our situation is urgent. 'Wise Response' among many, argue we must build local support systems now. You are invited to hear Robyn Zinck, Our Food Network; Antony Deaker, DCC; Tania Williams, Araiteuru Marae and Jennie Wagner-Gorton & Claire Speedy, The Valley Project, NEV. **Monday 25 May, Noon, DCC Library 4th Floor.** Free refreshments afterwards **Nau mai ki te katoa! Everyone welcome!**

This June, a relic of St Carlo Acutis, the Church's first millennial saint, will be visiting Dunedin.

In preparation, the Little Sisters of the Poor are hosting an evening of Adoration on Friday the 29th May at 7pm, 295 Brockville Road. All are welcome.

"When we face the sun we get a tan, but when we stand before Jesus in the Eucharist we become saints"

St. Carlo Acutis

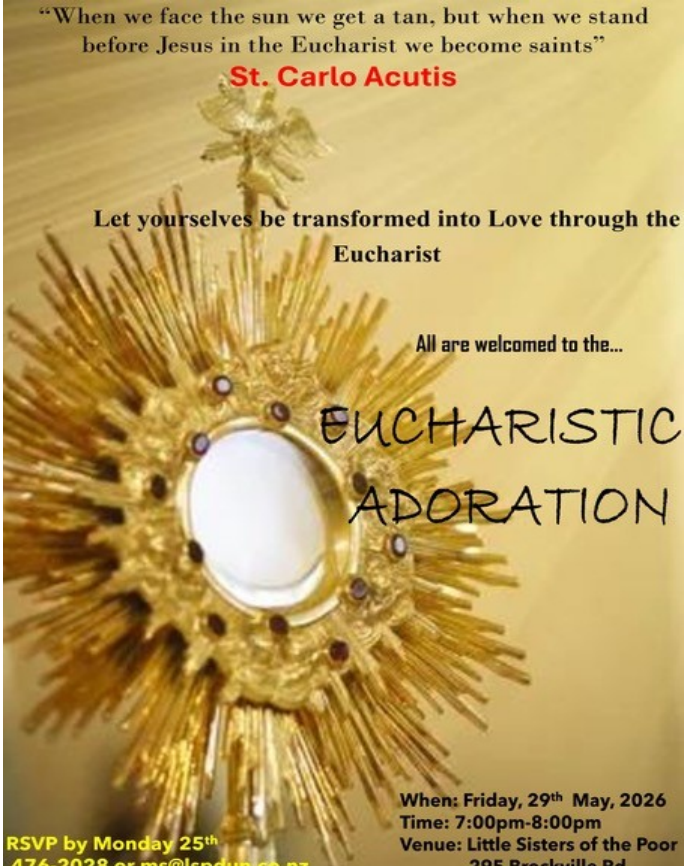
Let yourselves be transformed into Love through the Eucharist

All are welcomed to the...

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

When: Friday, 29th May, 2026
Time: 7:00pm-8:00pm
Venue: Little Sisters of the Poor
295 Brockville Rd

RSVP by Monday 25th
476-2028 or ms@lspdun.co.nz



Tax Receipts for the year end 31st March 2026

Receipts for this period are in the foyer of the church for collection. If you have recently started a new automatic payment could you please notify the parish office (Lynlea 4558933) so that the records can be updated and receipts issued. Again, many thanks for your contributions throughout the year.

The new planned giving envelopes have been issued for this financial year. If you would like to use the method of automatic payment the number is 060901-0054866-15 please use your name as the reference and "105" as the code.

Tap and Go Machine: For the next two months our two parish schools, St Bernadette's and St Brigid's Schools will be supported.

A message from our Schools:

At this time, more families are needing help with everyday costs such as school lunches, transport to attend school and for school trips, and extracurricular activities. For the rest of April and all of May we warmly invite you to make a donation to support our Parish Schools. Thank you for your kindness and support.

Thankyou for all of the plates that people have donated. It was great to replenish them this way.



Pentecost Sunday

1st Reading: Acts 2:1-11
2nd Reading: 1 Cor 12-13
Gospel: John 20:19-23