

Hour of Prayer for Patronal Name Recommended Format

Indicative times are based on a 2pm start, adjust as necessary.

2.00pm | Welcome

Good afternoon, and thank you for joining us for this Hour of Prayer. The faithful in the Diocese of Christchurch have been asked to pray for a specific intention today: For Bishop Michael's ongoing discernment on the name of our new cathedral.

Over the past two months, the Catholic community has responded generously to the invitation to assist Bishop Michael in this process. With a group of advisers, he created a shortlist of seven names. After another round of feedback, that list has now been narrowed to three.

The patronal name of the new cathedral will be one of the following three: St Francis of Assisi; St John the Baptist; or The Blessed Sacrament.

During this Hour of Prayer, we will spend a period of time focusing on each of those three possible patronal names, hearing the Word of God and raising our voices in song.

There will also be periods of silence during which we can offer our own prayers to God.

Let us begin with the sign of the cross.

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Opening Prayer

We now invite the Holy Spirit into this time and place.

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolation, Through Christ Our Lord, Amen.

Pause for a period of silence



First Patronal Name

The first patronal name we will focus on is St Francis of Assisi.

St Francis was an Italian mystic, poet and friar who founded the Franciscan order. From a wealthy background, Francis chose a life of poverty. He is known for his ministry to the poor and underprivileged, as well as a care for nature and animals. He received a call from God to “rebuild my Church”.

From the feedback people provided, they support naming the Cathedral after St Francis because of his life of humility and simplicity, his focus on mission, service and charity, his heart for the poor and his alignment with ecological and environmental causes.

This reading is from the Gospel for Mass on the Feast of St Francis of Assisi.

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew

At that time Jesus answered:

"I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth,
for although you have hidden these things
from the wise and the learned
you have revealed them to the childlike.
Yes, Father, such has been your gracious will.
All things have been handed over to me by my Father.
No one knows the Son except the Father,
and no one knows the Father except the Son
and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him.

"Come to me, all you who labour and are burdened,
and I will give you rest.
Take my yoke upon you and learn from me,
for I am meek and humble of heart;
and you will find rest for yourselves.
For my yoke is easy, and my burden light."

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Pause for a period of silence

2.25pm | Second Patronal Name

The second possible patronal name is St John the Baptist.

John the Baptist, the cousin of Jesus, is Patron Saint of the Christchurch Diocese. He baptised Jesus, and prepared the way for the Lord. He died a martyr. Jesus offered great praise, saying “Of all the children born to women, there has never been anyone greater than John the Baptist.”

Among the reasons people suggested John the Baptist as the patronal name for our cathedral were his connection as patron saint of the Diocese, his missionary spirit, his example of humility, and his willingness and ability to point people to Jesus Christ.



This reading is from the Gospel for Mass on the Nativity of St John the Baptist.

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke

The time came for Elizabeth to have her child, and she gave birth to a son; and when her neighbours and relations heard that the Lord had shown her so great a kindness, they shared her joy.

Now on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; they were going to call him Zechariah after his father, but his mother spoke up. 'No,' she said 'he is to be called John.' They said to her, 'But no one in your family has that name', and made signs to his father to find out what he wanted him called. The father asked for a writing-tablet and wrote, 'His name is John.' And they were all astonished. At that instant his power of speech returned and he spoke and praised God. All their neighbours were filled with awe and the whole affair was talked about throughout the hill country of Judaea. All those who heard of it treasured it in their hearts. 'What will this child turn out to be?' they wondered. And indeed the hand of the Lord was with him.

Meanwhile the child grew up and his spirit matured. And he lived out in the wilderness until the day he appeared openly to Israel.

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Pause for a period of silence

2.40pm | Third Patronal Name

The final patronal name is The Blessed Sacrament

The Blessed Sacrament is the name of the church and the Cathedral that have stood on the Barbadoes St site where the new Cathedral will be built. Theologically, it refers to the Body and Blood of Christ that Catholics receive at Eucharistic celebrations.

People nominated The Blessed Sacrament because of the historical connection to the former Cathedral, the reality that the Blessed Sacrament is the source and summit of the Catholic faith and the prospect of a perpetual adoration chapel being built within the Cathedral precinct.

This reading is from the Gospel for Mass on the Solemnity of Corpus Christi.

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Mark

On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb was sacrificed, his disciples said to Jesus, "Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for you to eat the passover?"

So he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the city and you will meet a man carrying a pitcher of water. Follow him, and say to the owner of the house which he enters, "The Master says: Where is my dining room in which I can eat the passover with my disciples?" He will show you a large upper room furnished with couches, all prepared. Make the preparations for us there.' The disciples set out and went to the city and found everything as he had told them, and prepared the Passover.



And as they were eating he took some bread, and when he had said the blessing he broke it and gave it to them. 'Take it,' he said 'this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and when he had returned thanks he gave it to them, and all drank from it, and he said to them, 'This is my blood, the blood of the covenant, which is to be poured out for many. I tell you solemnly, I shall not drink any more wine until the day I drink the new wine in the kingdom of God.'

After psalms had been sung they left for the Mount of Olives.

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Pause for a period of silence

2.55pm | Concluding Prayer

Brother and Sisters, thank you for dedicating this hour to prayer, and specifically to praying for the new name of our cathedral. Before we offer this intention to Our Lady, let us pray the prayer that has been before us for the past several weeks.

Holy Spirit, inspire us as we discern a name for our new cathedral. Lead our Diocese to a patronal name that can encourage, challenge and comfort the People of God, and someone on whom we can rely for intercession. Amen.

Please join in our final hymn, Hail, Queen of Heaven (or another Marian hymn)

Hymn: Hail, Queen of Heaven

Hail, Queen of heav'n, the ocean Star:
Guide of the wand'rer here below,
Toss'd on life's surge we claim thy care;
Save us from peril and from woe.
Mother of Christ, Star of the Sea,
Pray for the wand'rer, pray for me.

O gentle, chaste, and spotless, Maid,
We sinners make our prayers through thee;
Remind thy Son that He has paid
The price of our iniquity.
Virgin most pure, Star of the sea,
Pray for the sinner, pray for me.

Sojourners in this vale of tears,
To thee, blest Advocate, we cry;
Pity our sorrows, calm our fears,
And soothe with hope our misery.
Refuge in grief, Star of the sea,
Pray for the mourner, pray for me.

