

Kaikoura

(From an occasional correspondent.)

The schools conducted by the Sisters of the Mission closed for the Christmas holidays on December 18, and the Sisters left for the Mother House on the 23rd. This time they took the route by coach to Cheviot, and thence by rail to Christchurch. This way has the advantage of charming scenery, and of enabling passengers to reach Christchurch by coach and train in one day. Before the Sisters left on their well-merited holidays, they erected a beautiful crib in the Church of the Sacred Heart. Naturally enough, this crib, with its admirable figures and artistic construction, is an object of much admiration and attraction. Only a small percentage of the people had ever before seen a crib, which of all things else is so appropriate at the Christmas season and so impressive withal. In drawing attention to this striking aid to Catholic faith and piety, Father Golden strongly admonished parents to bring their children to the crib so as to impress their plastic minds with the grand dogmas of religion which it so eloquently expresses. As the Divine Babe is the central figure in the interesting group, so is He by excellence the central figure in the Christian religion. Outside the Gospels, perhaps there are no means more calculated than the crib, with its adoring group, to impress minds with the truth and the reality of the Nativity of the Redeemer, God-made Man for man's elevation and redemption. Why the adoration of the shepherds, and the wise men? Is it not because they know by divine revelation that the new-born Child is their Lord and Redeemer and God? Indeed, the crib has a special fragrance of its own, and it makes a most wholesome and lasting impression.

The striking decorations of the altars and sanctuary were much enhanced by the costly candelabra just to hand from a Melbourne firm. The decorations were admirable, reflecting much credit on the Children of Mary, who are always to the fore for such and other church purposes. In connection with this must be mentioned with honor the name of Mr. Arthur Campbell, who was responsible for very artistic work in the sanctuary and down the body of the church. Though only on a brief visit with his wife and child to Ludstone, the home of his father-in-law, he busied himself with much effect in the church of his reception and First Communion, and of his happy marriage withal. The choir of the Sacred Heart won high praise for their excellent services on both Christmas Day and the following Sunday. It would be difficult to find a better choir in any of our smaller congregations in New Zealand. Some of the voices are excellent. There were overflowing congregations during the Christmas holidays, and large numbers received Holy Communion. The fruits and graces of the recent mission have not yet been exhausted. May they be permanent.

Feilding

Rev. Father O'Meara, of Feilding, has just received a cable message informing him of the death of his mother in Ireland. R.I.P.

DIOCESE OF CHRISTCHURCH

(From our own correspondent.)

January 4.

The Rev. Father Lowham, C.S.S.R., is at present engaged conducting the retreat here of the Marist Brothers of the South Island.

Reference was made by his Lordship the Bishop in the Cathedral on Sunday to the disastrous earthquake in Italy and the appalling loss of human life. Our prayers should mingle (he said) with those of the whole Catholic world for the many thousands who are the victims of death, and also for the suffering survivors.

Prizes were distributed prior to the Christmas vacation by his Lordship the Bishop, attended by the Cathedral clergy, to the children of the Catholic schools at Halswell, Addington, and Woolston, all of which are conducted by the Sisters of the Missions. Suitable entertainments in each instance were given, and many of the parents and friends of the children were present.

In connection with St. Anne's Church and School at Woolston a successful entertainment was given recently in the local Oddfellows' Hall by the Dresden Concert Party, consisting of some of our best-known amateur vocalists and musicians, under the direction of Mr. R. A. Horne,

manager of the Dresden Piano Company, who also acted as accompanist.

Masses were celebrated in the Cathedral on New Year's Day at 6, 7.30, and 9 o'clock. At the last Mass, which was largely attended, the Very Rev. Father Price, Adm., who was celebrant, in addressing the congregation with regard to the year just closed and to that just opening, most heartily wished each and everyone every blessing and happiness.

There was Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in the Cathedral on Sunday, last from the 11 o'clock Mass until Vespers. In the evening the Very Rev. Dr. Kennedy, S.M., Rector of the Meane Ecclesiastical Seminary, preached an instructive discourse from the text, 'He hath done all things well,' to a large congregation. There was also the usual procession, followed by Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

DIOCESE OF AUCKLAND

(By Telegraph from our own correspondent.)

January 4.

The Right Rev. Dr. Lenihan is expected to leave Genoa this week for New Zealand. He should arrive about February 17.

On next Monday evening, January 11, a general meeting of the city and suburban parishioners will be held for the purpose of making arrangements for celebrating St. Patrick's Day. It is contemplated to have a united celebration for the whole of the city and suburbs this year.

The annual retreat of the Marist Brothers of the North Island was commenced in Christmas week. Rev. Father Tigar, O.P., conducted the retreat at the Sacred Heart College. The Rev. Father Tigar is conducting the retreat for the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Auckland diocese this week.

At the last Mass at St. Benedict's on Sunday the Very Rev. Dean Gillan, V.G., paid an eloquent tribute to the labors of the Sisters of St. Joseph in that parish. Without the Sisters (he said) the parish would certainly be badly off. No one knew the amount of good they performed, and in the instruction and education and training of the children they worked most earnestly. In the interests of the parish they stood aside repeatedly, and now Fathers Brennan and Williams were about to inaugurate an entertainment for them which he called upon all to assist, thereby showing their appreciation of what was being done for them by the Sisters of St. Joseph.

In all the city and suburban churches very large congregations attended the Masses on Christmas Day. The high altar at the Cathedral was beautifully decorated, and it has seldom, if ever, looked better. The crib was placed near the altar rails. The choir, under Mr. Hiscocks, rendered the music in a finished manner. They were assisted by several leading members of Williamson's Company. Rev. Father Meagher addressed the congregation on the day's festival, and wished them every blessing and happiness. The Vicar-General at St. Benedict's delivered an impressive discourse, and earnestly urged the congregation to constantly practice religious devotions, and to ever keep before their minds the possibility that many present would not see the new year out. They should prepare while there was time to meet their Creator. He was pleased to have in the sanctuary that evening a young priest born in this country. He hoped that the example set by Father Ormond would be followed by many native-born New Zealanders; too often parents turned away the thoughts of their sons from God's service, thus inflicting a wrong upon the son and loss to the Church.

In response to an appeal made by their pastor, Rev. Father Mahoney, the Catholics of Onehunga gave a practical demonstration of their faith on a recent Sunday. At the suggestion of the members of the H.A.C.B. Society, who were to make their half-yearly general Communion, it was decided that the members of the different societies should approach the Holy Table on the same day. In addition to the Hibernians the members of both branches of the Sacred Heart Society, the Children of Mary, and the members of the Men's Club, as well as the children who were making their First Communion on that day, attended at the first Mass and received Holy Communion. In his address to the people, Father Mahoney stated how gratified he was at seeing so many communicants, including several who had been neglectful of their duty during the year, and that since the last mission, nearly three years ago, there had never been so many at one Mass. He reminded them that they were commemorating a happy Christmas in the best possible way, and wished them every happiness for the season.

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