

Diocesan News.

DIOCESE OF CHRISTCHURCH.

(From our own correspondent.)

December 29.

Despite the unseasonable weather the earlier Masses at the Pro-Cathedral were well attended on Christmas morning. Pontifical High Mass was celebrated at 11 o'clock by his Lordship Bishop Grimes, the Very Rev. Father Le Menant des Chesnais, V.G. being assistant priest, and the Very Rev. Dean Foley and Rev. Father Leen deacon and subdeacon respectively. The music was Beethoven's Mass in C, well rendered by a full choir and orchestra, Mr H. H. Loughnan conducting and Miss Funston presiding at the organ. The soloists were—Soprano, Mrs A. Mead; alto, Miss A. Bryant; tenor, Mr W. McKay; and bass, Mr D. Roche. Novello's setting of the 'Adeste Fideles' was sung at the Offertory, Mrs H. H. Loughnan taking the alto solo. The bishop preached on the Feast of the day. At Vespers his Lordship again pontificated. The high and side altars were tastefully adorned with choice flowers, and in the sanctuary there was a profusion of palms and pot plants, kindly supplied by Miss White. The body of the church was adorned with garlands and festoons of evergreens, the work of Mrs A. Mead and Misses White, Bryant, Kearney, and Hayward. The crib was nicely arranged by Mr Frank Gehegan. Masses were also celebrated at the outlying churches.

At St. Mary's Church, Manchester street, Masses were celebrated at 7 and 9.30 a.m. and High Mass was celebrated at 11 o'clock by the Rev. Father Marnane, who preached an instructive sermon on a text from the Gospel of the day—'And the word was made flesh.' The music was Haydn's Mass No. 2, well rendered by the choir, assisted by an efficient orchestra, Mr H. Rossiter conducting and Mrs. W. D. Cronin presiding at the organ. The various solos were given with good effect. The high and side altars were profusely decorated with flowers and foliage and presented a particularly pleasing appearance. At the earlier Masses the greater portion of the congregation received Holy Communion. Masses were also celebrated in the suburban churches attached to the parish. In the evening there were Vespers and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. A crib was arranged in the church in a very devotional manner.

St. Joseph's Church, Lyttelton, was decorated for Christmas Day by the Sisters of Mercy in a very tasteful manner and Masses were celebrated at 6.30, 8, and 9 a.m. by the Very Rev. Dean Foley, and in the evening there were devotions, sermon by the Dean, and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Good congregations were the rule throughout the day.

The Church of the Holy Name, Ashburton, was very effectively decorated for the great festival, and numerous members of the congregation approached the Holy Table at the early Masses celebrated by the Very Rev. Dean O'Donnell and Rev. Father Crotty.

At Rangiora large congregations attended the Masses celebrated by the Rev. Father Hyland, the decorations being particularly tasteful.

The members of St. Mary's choir, at the invitation of the Rev. Father Marnane, adjourned to the presbytery, Manchester street, after the services on Christmas Day, when Mr. H. Rossiter, on their behalf, presented the organist, Mrs W. D. Cronin, with a purse of sovereigns on the occasion of her retirement from the position so long and ably filled in connection with the church. The Rev. Father Marnane expressed his great regret that ill-health compelled Mrs. Cronin to relinquish her duties, and spoke in complimentary terms of the great service she had rendered and the material assistance given by her on all occasions.

His Lordship the Right Rev. Dr. Grimes presided at the annual vacation entertainment and distribution of prizes in connection with St. Mary's Convent of Mercy High School, Colombo street, when the following excellent programme was well rendered by the pupils:—Pianoforte duet (2 pianos), Misses N. Turner, H. Flynn, G. Bodington, N. Bower; chorus, pupils; violin solo, Miss H. Flynn; action song, infants; pianoforte duet (2 pianos), Misses M. Flynn, V. Cameron, E. Harris, D. Marks; drill, 12 little boys; pianoforte solo, Miss M. Flynn; chorus, pupils; violin duet (2 violins), Misses P. Bain and H. Flynn; vocal solo, Miss Hutchison; pianoforte duet (2 pianos), Misses G. Smith, M. Brown, L. Joyce, L. Bain; drill, young ladies; pianoforte solo (2 pianos), Misses M. Flynn and E. Thompson; chorus, pupils.

The prize list was as follows:—

Christian Doctrine—Hilda Flynn 1, May Wood 2, Lennie Moss, 3.

Good Conduct—Maud Hine.

Arithmetic—Peggie Bain 1, Hilda Flynn 2, Alice Nelson 3, Jane Donnelly 4, Gordon Procter 5, Bernard Murray 6, Vernon Haydon 7.

Grammar and Composition—Muriel Brown 1, Nellie Turner 2.

Writing—Lilian Simpson 1, Frances Flynn 2, Grace Plummer 3, Horace Hunt 4, Stanley Lloyd 5, Alfred White 6, Willie Strouts 7.

Reading and Recitation—Nellie Turner 1, Lucy Fleming 2, Muriel Simpson 3, Gwendoline Procter 4, Leah Selig 5, Irene Lane 6, Perl Lloyd 7.

Geography—Hilda Flynn 1, Alice Nelson 2, Lucy Fleming 3, Carl Plummer 4, Cyril White 5.

Spelling and dictation—Frances Flynn 1, Dorothy Procter 2, Vida Rayner 3, Nellie Goggan 4, Victor White 5, Basil Haskins 6, Willie Goode 7, Arnold Roche 8.

Drawing—Landscape, Lilian Bain; freehand, Lizzie Joyce, Peggie Bain, Herbert Wood.

Needlework—Muriel Brown 1, Lilian Bain 2.

French—Muriel Brown.

Shorthand and typewriting—Lizzie Joyce.

Music (instrumental)—Maggie Flynn 1, Percy Augarde 2, Lizzie Joyce 3; violin: Hilda Flynn 4, Nellie Turner 5, Nessie Bower 6.

Music (theoretical)—Nellie Turner.

TIMARU.

(From our own correspondent.)

The last Christmas of the century has passed away, and in Timaru it varied little from its predecessors. The usual excursion trains carried away a good number of townsfolk to other districts to spend their holidays, while they brought many pleasure seekers to enjoy the attractions the town affords. On Christmas Eve the town presented a gay appearance, the different business places being gaily decorated and showing their choicest and best goods to tempt the crowd that thronged the streets.

Christmas morning broke dull and cold, but notwithstanding the three Masses celebrated at the Church of the Sacred Heart were well attended. The Rev. Father Tubman celebrated High Mass and also preached on the gospel of the day, concluding his sermon by wishing one and all a merry Christmas. The choir, under the baton of Mr. Mayne, sang Gounod's 'Messe Solennelle,' the vocalists being Mrs. T. Lynch and Miss McGuinness (sopranos), Miss McKennah (alto), Messrs. Jefferson and Eiby (tenors), and Messrs. McDonald and Bennetts (basses). The 'Adeste Fideles' was sung at the Offertory. In the evening Hummel's 'O Salutaris' was exquisitely sung by Mrs. T. Lynch. Miss M. McGuinness presided at the organ and played in her usual finished style. The church decorations are deserving of special mention. The altar was tastefully decorated with flowers and evergreens, garlands of flowers swung gracefully around the aisles, and folds of green drapery hung from the beams to the sides of the church, with the motto 'Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth to men of good will' in gold and silver lettering. At night the church looked exceedingly pretty, and great credit is due to Misses McGowan and McCabe and their assistants for the successful manner in which they carried out the decorations. The Rev. Father Aubry officiated at Fairlie and the Rev. Father Pertuis at St. Andrews, making in all eight Masses celebrated in the parish on Christmas Day.

The Rev. Father Kelly, S.J., arrived in Timaru from Sydney on Thursday, and is to conduct a retreat at the Convent of the Sacred Heart for the religious. A retreat for the ladies of this and the neighboring parishes will also be preached by the Rev. Father, commencing on January 7 and ending on the 12th.

The Marist Brothers are in Wellington at the annual retreat of their Order.

Much joy is felt in Timaru at the advancement of three of its former parish priests. Father Aubry has been appointed adviser to the head of the Marist Order in Lyons, Archdeacon Devoy as Provincial of the same Order in New Zealand, and Father Lewis Vicar-General at Wellington. The prospect of an occasional visit from our former popular parish priest, Archdeacon Devoy, is hailed with general satisfaction. The good news is not without a tinge of apprehension, as Timaru seems such a happy vantage ground or stepping stone for promotion we have some fears concerning our worthy pastor, and much as we would wish his advancement we are selfish enough not to wish it fearing we may lose him.

At the Point township the bazaar in aid of the church funds was a pronounced success, £275 being the gross receipts, the net profit being £250, a result that Father Galerne and his lady assistants may be well proud of.

The bazaar at Waimate was also commenced under very favorable auspices. It was opened by Major Steward, M.H.R., in a happy speech, a graceful reference being made to the services of Father Goutenoire, a former parish priest. On the platform were Dr. Barclay (Mayor of Waimate) and the Rev. Fathers Regnault, O'Connell, and Tubman. A satisfactory result is anticipated, and judging from the well-filled stalls and the success of the opening it is sure to be realised.

The quarterly meeting of the Hibernian Society was held in their new rooms, St. John's Hall, on Thursday. The president (Mr M. F. Dennehy) occupied the chair. Previous to the usual business the president thanked the Rev. Father Tubman for placing such an excellent meeting-room at their disposal. Correspondence was received from Rev. Brother Mark, Wellington, thanking the branch for their resolution of sympathy and congratulations forwarded to him over the Stoke trials, and from the district secretary forwarding instructions re the juvenile branch which it is proposed to establish. Delegates (Messrs M. F. Dennehy and P. Kane) were appointed to attend the annual meeting to be held in Dunedin in February. The receipts for the evening amounted to £40. After the meeting a social hour was spent. The toasts of the chaplain (Rev. Father Tubman), past chaplain (Archdeacon Devoy), and the president were proposed with musical honors, and a most pleasant meeting brought to a close.

The Rev. Father Tubman has appointed Mr. P. Kane as collector to receive subscriptions towards defraying the expenses of the Marist Brothers in the Stoke cases. The thanks of all Catholics are due to the Timaru Herald for the spirit of fair play it displayed, and for its manly and cool headed action in connection with those trials. In a leader before the event it pointed out with almost prophetic knowledge the upshot of the whole fiasco. The Herald stands out in marked distinction from many of its screaming and hysterical contemporaries throughout the Colony. The Herald has one of the few editors in New Zealand who kept his head cool and who can look back with complacency on his consistent and manly action during the persecutions the much injured Brothers were subjected to.