



# Dungog & Gresford Parishes

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE

Incorporating worshipping communities at **St Mary's Church**, Brown Street, Dungog, **St Patrick's Church**, Rifle Street, Clarence Town, **St Helen's Church**, Park Street, East Gresford, **Sacred Heart Church**, Summerhill Road, Summer Hill via Vacy, and serving the surrounding districts.

## SUNDAY 4 DECEMBER 2022

### 2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR A

#### Parish Staff

Fr Andrew Doohan (*Administrator*)  
Kerry Copus (*Parish Secretary*)

#### Presbytery & Parish Office

55 Brown Street, Dungog  
PO Box 24, Dungog NSW 2420

P: (02) 4992 1477

E: dungog.parish@mn.catholic.org.au

W: www.dungoggresfordcatholic.org.au

#### Office Hours

The Parish Office is staffed on Tuesdays from 10am until 2pm & Fridays from 10am until 1pm.

#### Parish Bulletin

Items for inclusion in the Parish Bulletin should be received at the Parish Office by 5pm on Wednesdays. Bulletins can be downloaded from the website.

Bulletin Coordinator—Lyn Barham (02) 4992 2110

#### Other Contacts

Clarence Town Val Preece—0403 251 434,  
(02) 4996 4474, or email  
vip\_1@bigpond.com

Gresford Faith Banister  
0427 536 248

#### Parish School

St Joseph's Primary School  
49 Brown Street, Dungog NSW 2420  
Mrs Lisa McNeilly (*Principal*)

P: (02) 4992 1377

E: admin@dungog.catholic.edu.au

W: www.dungog.catholic.edu.au

#### A Pastoral Note...

Folks may have noticed that St Mary's Church in Dungog has started to have its doors open during the day most days of the week.

The reason for this goes back to something that our late Bishop Bill was passionate about: church buildings are not simply used for Mass, and they should be accessible as much as possible for anyone to use as a place of refuge, or a place of prayer, or a place where they can just sit and be.

While circumstances mean that not every church building is able to offer this possibility, primarily because there's no one living 'on site', I have also felt it appropriate to have a church building open whenever possible and that has always been my practice in other parishes where I was living close by.

Now that I have settled more permanently into my new home, I have thought it time to start opening the doors of St Mary's each morning and closing them each evening. On those occasions when it will not be possible for me to ensure the security of the church—when I am out of town overnight, for example—the doors will be closed as appropriate.

Other than that, however, St Mary's will be open for people to use during the daylight hours of each day.

Have a blessed week.

Fr Andrew

The Catholic Parishes of Dungog & Gresford recognize that they sit upon the traditional country of the Worimi people. We acknowledge their cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing relationship with this land. We pay our respects to their Elders—past, present, and emerging—and commit ourselves to working together for reconciliation and justice.

# SCRIPTURAL CONTEXT

## Brood of Vipers!

*The gospel of Matthew in particular casts the Pharisees in a very dim light. John's insult to them, calling them a brood of vipers, is indeed echoed by Jesus later in this gospel. In this gospel, Jesus describes the Pharisees as hypocrites and blind guides. The community for whom this gospel was written were predominantly Jewish Christians. However, at the time of writing serious cracks were appearing in the relationship between the Jewish community and the Christian sect. This gospel aligns closely with the Jewish tradition but is very critical of the inflexibility of the Pharisees.*

### Dungog Christmas Luncheon

The Christmas Luncheon at Dungog was a rousing success, with twenty-two gathering in the Parish Hall to enjoy the wonderful food that had been prepared. A further nine plates were dispatched for folks unable to attend.

The lucky door prize was taken home by Cheryl Maher, while the raffle prizes of a Christmas cake and shortbread were won by Pam Edwards and Maisie Trow respectively.

Many thanks to all the willing workers that made the day such a hit, and the efforts of Pam Edwards for organising the occasion even while suffering the effects of COVID.

### Cuppa @ Dungog

Next Sunday, 11 December, there will be a cup of tea in the Parish Hall after the 9.30am Mass. Please bring a plate to share, and stay to enjoy company and conversation.

### Safeguarding in our Parishes means ...

The safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is important.

Our Catholic Parishes of Dungog & Gresford are committed to fostering communities of safety and care.

We acknowledge our legal, moral, and spiritual responsibilities to care for and uphold the dignity and rights of children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

### Christmas Mass Timetable

Given that Christmas Day falls on a Sunday in 2022, our Christmas Mass timetable will follow the usual Sunday Mass pattern.

Each of the three Masses will follow a slightly different set of Readings and Proper:

Saturday 24 December, 5.30pm, East Gresford:  
*Vigil Mass*

Sunday 25 December, 8am, Clarence Town:  
*Mass at Dawn*

Sunday 25 December, 9.30am, Dungog:  
*Mass during the Day*

Fr Andrew

### Reconciliation During Advent

As part of our Advent preparations, the Sacrament of Penance (Reconciliation) will be available as follows:

The 1st Rite of Reconciliation will be available each Saturday of Advent at St Mary's, Dungog between 10am and 11am.

A 2nd Rite of Reconciliation will be celebrated on **Thursday 22 December** at St Mary's, Dungog commencing at 6pm. At this point I do not believe that there will be a need to invite other priests to join us for this celebration.

### St Joseph's School End of Year Mass

On Friday 9 December, students from St Joseph's School will celebrate their 'End of Year' Mass at 9.30am. The Parish community is warmly welcome to join our students.

The End of Year Presentation will take place at 11.30am at the Dungog Memorial RSL Club.

### Waiting for Purpose—Advent Reflection

The Diocesan Advent Reflection, entitled "Waiting for Purpose", is available for everyone by visiting [bit.ly/3TvOg7s](https://bit.ly/3TvOg7s). The resource uses a process of Mystagogical Reflection to encounter Christ where we are, to pay attention to what Christ reveals in the scripture and the living tradition of our faith, to share this, to connect it to our life now and to be changed by it.

There will be the opportunity for parishioners to gather each **Tuesday** evening of Advent at **7pm**. All are welcome.

For those wanting to connect via Zoom during Advent, there is an opportunity to do so each Monday at 10am. To register go to [bit.ly/3yQ0K1Q](https://bit.ly/3yQ0K1Q).

## Opportunities Outside The Parish

### Pints with a Purpose: Pilgrimage

On Monday 5 December you're invited to join the Diocesan Council for Ministry with Young People at Pints with a Purpose. Ryan Gato, the coordinator of the Diocesan Pilgrimage to World Youth Day 2023 will explore pilgrimage with us; drawing upon his own inspiring stories to illustrate this life changing, awe inspiring, ever ancient ever new tradition. The event starts at 6pm at the Sydney Junction Hotel. For more information, please contact Mary-Anne de Luca on 0409 077 373.

### Become An SRE Volunteer

Did you know that some 50% of Catholic children are in state schools? Have you ever thought of spreading the good news of the gospel and the love of Jesus Christ with children? Have you ever thought about becoming a Special Religious Educator?

This could be an opportunity for you to meet new people, discover new friendships and build quality relationships whilst mastering skills and confidence in Catechetics.

You can make a difference in the schools within your parish! For people of faith, knowing you are participating in Christ's call to share the Good News to all is a great source of joy and meaning.

If you would like to learn more about how you can help, please contact the Pastoral Ministries team on 4979 1200.

### Dungog Christmas Hamper Raffle

A basket has been placed at the rear of the Dungog & Clarence Town churches where donations towards this year's Christmas Hamper can be placed. Your generosity in contributing to the hamper is gratefully received.

### SRE Teachers for Gresford & Vacy

Gresford parishioners currently attend Gresford and Vacy Primary Schools to offer Special Religious Education using the Sydney Diocesan program "Christ is Our Light and Life".

A additional teacher for either or both of these two schools—and especially for Vacy Primary School—would be very welcome.

Training and support are offered for any one interested in taking up this role.

Please contact the Parish Office in the first instance.

## Bulletin by Email

The Parish Office is no longer emailing the weekly bulletin to parishioners via email. This practice has been replaced by the automated mailing list attached to the parishes' website.

If you would like to receive a email notification when the bulletin is posted to the website, please sign up using the form on the right hand side of the front page.

### Job Opportunity: Casual Receptionist

The Sisters of Mercy at Tighes Hill are looking for a Relief Casual Receptionist/Secretary for a short assignment from 8 December 2022 to 6 January 2023. The days will be each Thursday and Friday from 9am to 5pm.

Previous experience and an understanding of Catholic organisation is preferred. If you are interested in this assignment, please call Sister Margaret on 4964 6400.

### Palms Volunteer from Dungog Parish

You will have seen regular notices in the weekly parish bulletin concerning volunteering opportunities overseas with Palms Australia, which enables skill sharing, vocational mentoring and the enhancement of local capacity in overseas communities which have requested assistance.

Dungog parishioner John Bradley has answered the call and will depart in January 2023 to take up a placement at Don Bosco High School and Vocational Training Centre in Saloleloga, Samoa as a Science & Maths Teacher. John is an experienced Science teacher in Catholic high schools and previously volunteered with Palms in Kiribati from 2001 to 2003.

Members of Dungog Parish are invited to support John in his placement by making his mission a prayer intention. Parishioners can also support John's placement financially, either with regular support or a one-off donation, by visiting <https://palms.org.au/project/chemistry-maths-teacher-mentor-in-savaii-samoa/>

John's placement support team includes several members of the Dungog Parish community. Fr Andrew and Esma Tiernan (who was herself a Palms volunteer in Kiribati) are part of that team, and will receive regular updates from John about his work in Samoa and how the support of parish members is assisting.

To enquire about opportunities with Palms, visit [www.palms.org.au](http://www.palms.org.au) or phone 02 9560 5333.

## The Parish Diary...(for the week ahead)

2nd Week of Advent, Year A

Monday—5 December

Tuesday—6 December

Wednesday—7 December

Memorial of St Ambrose

5,30pm Mass @ Dungog

Thursday—8 December

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception

**No Mass—Fr Andrew attending workshop on Parish Governance.**

Friday—9 December

9.30am Mass @ Dungog (End of Year Mass for St Joseph's school)

Saturday—10 December

10am Reconciliation @ Dungog

Sunday—11 December

Third Sunday of Advent, Year A

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9:30am Mass @ Dungog

11:30am Mass @ Summer Hill

## Today's Liturgy:

**1st Reading** Isaiah 11:1-10

**Psalm** Ps 71:

Resp: Justice shall flourish in his time, and fullness of peace for ever.

**2nd Reading** Romans 15:4-9

**Acclamation** Luke 3:4, 6

Alleluia, alleluia!

Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths: all people shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia!

**Gospel** Matthew 3:1-12

**Memorial Acclamation**

When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.

## Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for December:

*"We pray for volunteer non-profit organisations committed to human development; may they find people dedicated to the common good and ceaselessly seek out new paths to international cooperation."*

## Getting Ready for Christmas

The Dungog Uniting Church invites everyone to a Combined Churches service of Carols and Readings to celebrate the Advent on **Sunday 4 December** at **6.30pm**.

The Service will be followed by a supper in their hall, and you are asked to bring a plate to share.

# GOSPEL FOCUS

## Out of the wilderness

*The wilderness holds a special place in scripture. Time spent in the wilderness is associated with a time of preparation for undertaking a special purpose. When Moses led the people from Egypt they wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. This was a time of renewing themselves after their time in Egypt and rediscovering their covenant with God. After his baptism, Jesus retreats to the wilderness to prepare for his public ministry. It was also out of the wilderness that a lot of rebellion and unrest emerged. A desire for change and action is what comes out of the wilderness.*

## In Your Charity, Please Pray for:

### Those Who Have Died:

**Those Whose Anniversary of Death Is In November:** Katie Rumbel, Elizabeth Holstein, Keith Schumaker, Margaret Egan, Ella Maher, Alan Robertson, Christine Knight, Margaret Miners, Mollie Smith, George Maurer, Mervyn Trappel, Paul Murphy, Rowland Young, Catherine Reid, Brian Smith, Thora Tindall, Margaret Egan, Valma Osmond, Nancy Dickson.

*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.*

*May they rest in peace.*

**Those Who Are Sick:** Maryann Smith, Tracy Copus, Daphne Bond, Maree McCulloch, Leonie Young, Lisa Reid, Lyn Barry, Bev Herbert, Denise Wenden, Warren Wade, Irene Robinson, Ray Tonkin (Qld), Luke Barry, Joanne Curry, Kathie Maynard, Kevin Ward, Brian Holstein, David Loudon, Michaela Brown, Phillip Hartup, Bella Duggan, Ella Rusak, Peter Byron, Colleen Primrose, Bert Preece.