



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 19 MARCH 2023

4TH SUNDAY OF LENT, YEAR A

Parish Staff

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

Presbytery & Parish Office

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W: www.dungoggresfordcatholic.org.au

Emergency contact for Fr Andrew: 0412 405 671.

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. Copies of the Bulletin are available from the Parish website and are updated weekly.

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

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A Scripture Commentary—Dianne Bergant

The search for the new king and the choice and anointing of David open a new chapter in the story of the Israel. Each step of the way is determined by God, making the history of Israel a history of salvation. David was considered too young or unimportant to be considered. Yet he is the one selected. Once again, God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the strong. David's anointing was a solemn action that ceremonially sealed God's election. Following the ritual, the spirit of the Lord, the principle of dynamic divine action, rushed upon David. God's saving power would be brought to the community through the agency of this particular individual.

This responsorial psalm is one of the most familiar and best loved psalms of the entire psalter. It paints vivid pictures of a carefree existence, peaceful rest and abundant fruitfulness. Although 'shepherd' suggests a flock rather than merely one sheep, here the focus is on the individual. To characterise the Lord as a shepherd is to trust that God will lead, guard and protect the flock. In addition to this image, God is characterised as a host, who supervises a banquet and within whose house the psalmist ultimately dwells. This banquet is a public witness to God's high regard for the psalmist, who will continue to enjoy God's favour in God's house.

The move from darkness to light is the principal metaphor used by the author to describe the radical change that has taken place in the lives

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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.

of the Christians as a result of their commitment to Christ. The three qualities that are produced by the light – goodness, righteousness, truth – are merely symbolic of the complete transformation of character that this light can effect. The passage ends three phrases closely associated with Christian initiation that describe the transition from inertia or restriction to vibrancy. From sleep to wakefulness; from death to new life; from darkness to illumination. Christians have entered into a new state of being, which will require of them a new way of living.

The healing of the blind man is not a restoration, for the man was born blind. By means of the water that washed away his blindness, he is made a new creation. He progresses from knowing the name of the one who cured him, to professing that Jesus is a prophet, to proclaiming that he comes from God. The struggle between darkness and light, between blindness and sight runs throughout this account. Jesus is the light of the world. The man, who is gradually brought from physical blindness to sight, also progressively moves from spiritual blindness to religious insight. The Pharisees were blind to the truth that the newly cured man saw so clearly. The one who was blind sees, and those who can see are blind.

© Dianne Bergant CSA

Dianne Bergant CSA was a Professor of Biblical Studies at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, where she taught from 1978 to 2014. She holds a BS in Elementary Education from Marian College, Fond du Lac, WI; an MA and PhD in Biblical Languages and Literature from St Louis University. Amongst other things, she served as President of Catholic Biblical Association of America (2000-2001) and has been awarded honorary doctorates from several other universities. She was an active member of the Chicago Catholic/Jewish Scholars Dialogue (1988-2017) and sat on the editorial boards of *The Bible Today* (1979-2005), *Biblical Theology Bulletin* (1990-2014), *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* (1992-2001), *New Theology Review* (1997-2003), *Teaching Theology and Religion* (2003-2005), and *Chicago Studies* (2003-2009). She has taught and lectured in many places in the United States and abroad and has written numerous books, articles and chapters in books.

Tuesday Nights of Lent in Dungog

In Lent 2023, Mark Wilson is coordinating a Tuesday night program of reflection and prayer.

Each week will begin at 7pm with the Lenten reflection using the Diocese of Wollongong's 2023 Lenten Program (*Triumph*) and will be followed by the Stations of the Cross for those who wish to remain.

Everyone is welcome to participate in this Lenten exercise. Copies of the Lenten Program booklets will be provided to participants.

If you would like further information, please speak with Mark after Mass.

Holy Week & Paschal Triduum

With the great celebration of Easter drawing ever closing, please note the schedule of liturgy and public devotions that will take place during the week leading up to Easter Sunday:

Sunday 2 April

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

Weekend Masses as usual.

Monday 3 April

No Masses or public devotions today

Tuesday 4 April

7pm Chrim Mass @ Cathedral

Wednesday 5 April

5.30pm Mass @ Dungog

Thursday 6 April

Holy Thursday

7pm Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper @
Dungog

Friday 7 April

Good Friday

10am Stations of the Cross @ Dungog, East
Gresford, and Clarence Town

3pm Celebration of the Lord's Passion @
Dungog

Saturday 8 April

Holy Saturday

7pm The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night @
Dungog

Sunday 9 April

Sunday of the Resurrection

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

10am Mass @ East Gresford

Living the Gospel

Lenten Light

The story of the man born blind is a perfect choice for the Lenten season. During this season we are invited once again to open our eyes to Jesus; to step out of darkness and into the light; to look towards the future with hope and not despair. When we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus at the Easter vigil, we celebrate the coming of the Light of the World into our lives. This annual call to turn away from darkness and walk in the light is a powerful and poetic call to focus our lives on the way of Jesus.

Opportunities Outside The Parish

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 our 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: Rose McAllister, Manager Formation & Education (0414 962 922) or Nicki Graham, Officer Formation & Education (0417 773 444)

Availability of Sacrament of Penance

The Sacrament of Penance is celebrated regularly. More details can be found on the Parish website under the 'Mass Times' tab at the top.

Chrism Mass 2023

This year's Chrism Mass will take place during Holy Week on **Tuesday 4 April at 7.00pm** in the Sacred Heart Cathedral Newcastle West. This is a first opportunity for all who wish to gather, to celebrate with our new Bishop, Michael Kennedy at Mass and a light supper. All are welcome. For more information, visit bit.ly/3mJILXH.

Parish Volunteers Required from each of the churches of the two parishes willing to collect the Oil of the Sick and the Oil of Catechumens on behalf of their respective churches. Please contact Fr Andrew in the first instance by email (preferable) or phone.



Sacraments of Initiation for Children

The finishing touches are being applied to the first online module for parents and children interested in completing their Christian Initiation within the Parishes of Dungog & Gresford.

The first module—'Preparing for First Reconciliation'—will soon be ready for enrolment, while the remaining two—'The Sacrament of Confirmation' and 'Preparing for First Communion'—are not that far away.

More information can be found on the website under the CELEBRATIONS tab on the top menu. Please pass this information on to anyone who might find it helpful.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Light of the World

The events of today's gospel passage occur within an extended passage of the gospel of John in which Jesus attends Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles (Jn 7:1 following). A feature of the feast was the illumination of the Temple. Pilgrims would cover the Temple with lights and torches so that it shone out over the entire city. It was during this feast that Jesus declared himself to be the Light of the World and, a few verses later, healed the blind man and brought light into his world.

Expressions of Interest—Christian Formation Course 2023/24

Are you wanting to know more about Christianity and develop a deeper understanding of the Catholic Church?

The Christian Formation Course (CFC) is a learning experience that allows participants to explore the foundational elements of the Catholic Faith Tradition. This one-year course introduces participants to scripture, theology, church history, sacramental life and liturgy.

Commencing on Tuesday 2 May 2023, no prerequisite formation or qualification is required to enrol.

To find out more about the Christian Formation Course, visit: www.mn.catholic.org.au/church-mission/catholic-life/faith-formation/christian-formation-course/.

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

4th Week of Lent, Year A

Monday—20 March

Solemnity of St Joseph, Spouse of Mary
9.30am Mass @ Dungog

Tuesday—21 March

Wednesday—22 March

5.30pm Mass @ Dungog

Thursday—23 March

9.30am Mass @ East Gresford

Friday—24 March

9.30am Mass @ Dungog (with Kinder, Year
1 & 2 students from St Joseph's)

Saturday—25 March

Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

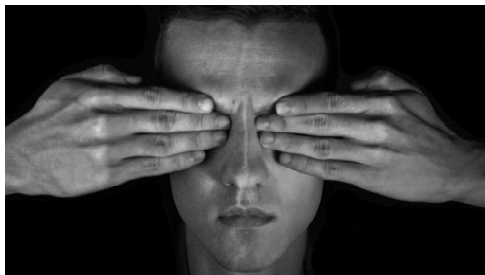
5.30pm Mass @ East Gresford

Sunday—26 March

5th Sunday of Lent

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9.30am Mass @ Dungog



In Your Charity, Please Pray for:

Those Who Have Died:

Those Whose Anniversary of Death Is In March:

Gordon Smith, Dan Harrison, Linda Gleeson, Vincent Smith, Eileen Lane, Marie Williams, Gwen Richards, Alexander Loudon, Claude McGinty, Herb Trappel, Allan Turner, Arthur Preece, Thelma Lowe, Joyce Copus, Leo Maher, Matthew Harding, Vincent Lane, Vince Banister, Gerry Gehrig.

*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, Kathie Maynard, Kevin Ward, Brian Holstein, David Loudon, Michaela Brown, Phillip Hartup, Bella Duggan, Ella Rusak, Peter Byron, Bert Preece, Naida McCarthy, Michael Primrose, Peter Rooke.

Today's Liturgy:

1st Reading 1 Samuel 16: 1, 6-7, 10-13

Psalm Ps 22:

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

2nd Reading Ephesians 5:8-14

Acclamation John 8:12

Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!
I am the light of the world, says the Lord;
whoever follows me will have the light of life.
Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

Gospel John 9:1-41

Memorial Acclamation

Save us, Saviour of the world,
for by your Cross and Resurrection
you have set us free.

Morning Tea at Dungog

The next morning tea in Dungog will take place today after the 9.30am Mass. Please stay to share food, good company, and good conversation.

Project Compassion 2023

For those who may wish to have them, a supply of Project Compassion boxes or Weekly Envelopes are available from the churches. Please take a box or set of envelopes if you wish to.

This year there is also the option of donating via our Project Compassion fundraising page. This page can be found by using the following link bit.ly/3lvYYPE or via your mobile device with the QR code here.



Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for March:

"We pray for those who have suffered harm from members of the Church; may they find within the Church herself a concrete response to their pain and suffering."

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.