



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 16 APRIL 2023

2ND SUNDAY OF EASTER, YEAR A

Parish Staff

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

Presbytery & Parish Office

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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
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A Pastoral Note...

The arrival of Easter also means that the word 'Alleluia' returns to our vocabulary. The word itself comes from the Hebrew, in which language it is 'Hallelujah', and can be translated as 'Praise God'.

It is a phrase of joy, one meant to render our praise and joy to God. It is intimately connected with Easter and the Easter Season—for obvious reasons—but also extends through the rest of our Christian life...with the exception of Lent, when our joy is subdued in preparation for the Great Festival of the Resurrection.

With this one word, our 'Alleluia', we can encapsulate the entirety of our joyful praise of the One whom we follow, the One who created us, the One who has saved us. In that context, our 'Alleluia' is a bold and dangerous step, and not something to be taken lightly.

Our 'Alleluia' is also something we are supposed to sing rather than say, as we raise our voices in praise of God. Just like saying the song 'Happy birthday' means it loses something that is innate to it, so too the saying of 'Alleluia' means it loses something of the power that belongs to the word.

Now I am not suggesting we go out and start singing 'Alleluia' in every context—that would just be odd—but perhaps we should be singing 'Alleluia' in those moments when it is appropriate to do so, as our default position rather than as an exception. Perhaps that's something worthy of our consideration, particularly during this great

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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.

Festival of Easter that we have only just embarked on.

As an aside—did you know that the *Order of Mass* presumes that the Gospel Acclamation is sung, by everyone present at Mass? The current version has removed an instruction that the Gospel Acclamation should be omitted when not sung, *but only* because it is assumed that the Acclamation is sung! The option still exists for those occasions when there is a First Reading but no Second Reading (e.g., a weekday Masses).

As we embark on our Easter journey, a journey that lasts for 50 glorious days, let's embrace the return of 'Alleluia' and praise our God often and loudly.

Have a blessed week...

Fr Andrew



Musical Update for Dungog

With the coming of Easter, there'll be a couple more minor changes to the music at Dungog:

- In addition to the other parts of the Mass that we are currently singing, we're going to start singing the 'Holy, Holy, Holy'.
- The Recessional Hymn will return.

Project Compassion 2023—LAST CALL!

Now that we have entered the Season of Easter, it would be appreciated if parishioners could finalise any Project Compassion contributions by **Monday 24 April**. This date will allow the funds to be remitted to Caritas Australia and be put to use.



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.

Parish Liturgical Conversations

Thanks to all those who have indicated an interest in the proposed Liturgical Conversations. There is certainly enough interest for this to go ahead. I'll go ahead and develop an outline of topics.

Some other topics for possible conversation series have already been proposed—other suggestions are more than welcome.

More details coming soon!



Engaging Your Faith Online Lectures

Catholic Theological College will be offering a series of 18 online sessions across May 2023 in their *Engaging Your Faith* series.

This set of sessions is entitled 'Theology, Vatican II, Scripture, Spirituality, Science & Faith'.

Attend all of them, or only those that pique your interest. Each session is available at a cost of \$25.

For more information and to register, visit CTC's website—ctc.edu.au/engaging-your-faith/.

Dungog's 'Women—Kind—Festival'

The Dungog & District Chamber of Commerce is introducing the 'Women—Kind—Festival' from 19 to 21 May to shine the light on women and at the same time support local business and not-for-profit organisations in the region.

The Festival commences with the Stella Bistro Fundraising High Tea at 11am on Friday 19 May. Tickets for this event are now available by going to <https://www.trybooking.com/CGSUC>.

On Saturday 20 May, there will be a Market Day in Dowling Street, with live music and street stalls lining the CBD.

Further information is available on the Chamber's website—www.ddcc.org.au

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.

Undoubtable Wounds

Fr Michael Tate

There is something attractive about Thomas the Doubter – something about his obstinate integrity in not too readily accepting the other disciples' report that they had seen the Risen Lord.

After all, he had devotedly followed this Galilean for several years, but then there was the shock and trauma of the barbaric death on the cross. Who could be surprised at his doubting the reports of his fellow apostles?

But our Risen Lord Jesus Christ was quite willing to wait, to embody the patience of God.

And the other disciples – now the 'true believers' in the resurrection – must have caught something of this patience of God. They did not expel Thomas from their company but kept him within their circle. It was their continuing friendship with the Doubter which gave him the opportunity to be present for the appearance of the Risen Lord in their midst.

Perhaps there is a lesson for the Church to not too quickly raise the barriers excluding those struggling with belief in the Christian faith.

That is a consoling aspect of this gospel episode. Another aspect ends up as quite a challenge for us.

Thomas was granted the gift of seeing the Risen Lord bearing the wounds of His crucifixion. Thomas was invited to touch them. Responding, he simply cries out: 'My Lord and my God.'

Did you notice that Thomas does not declare his belief in the Resurrection as such? That was all too apparent. Rather, he declares his faith in the *identity* of the risen Jesus Christ: 'My Lord and my God.'

Pope Francis says we can join Thomas in *this* faith, can *only* join Thomas in this faith, by touching the wounds of Christ. Those wounds are to be found in the body of someone wounded by hunger, humiliation, illness, enslavement in a myriad of ways.

We have to bend down and touch those wounds: feeding, esteeming, visiting, breaking chains. Otherwise we simply engage in philanthropy at a distance. We end up believing in a semblance of God, but not God embodied in the Risen Lord Jesus Christ always bearing his wounds.

As Pope Francis says: "Jesus asks us to take a leap of faith towards Him, but through these, His wounds.

Sometimes, we struggle with our faith – after all, it is an astounding claim that Jesus of Nazareth is God embodied for us. We may say, and certainly have heard others say: "I believe that Jesus of

Nazareth was a great teacher, or I am attracted by his miracles of healing, but to call him God? That is a step too far."

You, or the other person, are invited to touch the wounds of Christ and let the patience of God take care of the timing of the response of faith.

In the meantime we can take heart from the final blessing of Our Lord. Blessings are promised to we who have not seen the Risen Lord as such, but who find that, in touching his wounds we cannot help but proclaim, 'My Lord and my God'.

© Fr Michael Tate; mtate@bigpond.com

Rev Prof Michael Tate graduated in Law from the University of Tasmania in 1968, and in Theology from Oxford University in 1971. He lectured at the University of Tasmania from 1972-78, being Dean of the Faculty of Law in 1977-78. He was a Senator for Tasmania from 1978-93, being Federal Minister for Justice from 1987-93. He served as Ambassador to The Hague and the Holy See from 1993-96. He then returned to Australia and was ordained in May 2000 and has been a parish priest in the Archdiocese of Hobart since then. He is an Honorary Professor of Law at the University of Tasmania where he lectures in International Humanitarian Law.

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.

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)

2nd Week of Easter

Monday 17 April

Tuesday 18 April

Wednesday 19 April

5.30pm Mass @ Dungog

Thursday 20 April

9.30am Mass @ East Gresford

Friday 21 April

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

10am Reconciliation @ Dungog

Saturday 22 April

5.30pm Mass @ East Gresford

Sunday 23 April

3rd Sunday of Easter

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

Today's Liturgy:

1st Reading Acts 2:42-47

Psalm Ps 117:

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, his love is everlasting.

2nd Reading 1 Peter 1:3-9

Acclamation John 20:29

Alleluia, alleluia!

You believe in me, Thomas, because you have seen me; happy are those who have not seen me, but still believe!

Alleluia!

Memorial Acclamation

We proclaim your Death, O Lord,
and profess your Resurrection
until you come again.

Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for April:

"We pray for the spread and non violence, by decreasing the use of weapons by States and citizens."

Baptisms This Week

We welcome **Cash Ford**, together with his family and friends, as we celebrate his Baptism at St Patrick's on Saturday.

We welcome **Myles Clifton & Elkie Clifton**, together with their families and friends, as we celebrate their baptism at St Mary's on Sunday.

In Your Charity, Please Pray for:

Those Who Have Died: Lynette Barry.

Those Whose Anniversary of Death Is In April:

Bede Gehrig, Ruth Jones, Lenore McDermott, Paula Murphy, Robert Holdom, Dorothy Bowtell, Rex Garland, Bruno Rocco, Herbert John Preece, Allie Allen, Peter Allen, Tom O'Driscoll, Paddy Kilpinen, Bill Tyne, Neil Faber.

*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, 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, Michael Primrose, Peter Rooke.

Morning Tea at Dungog

The next morning tea in Dungog will take place today after the 9.30am Mass. Please join us for good food, good company, and good conversation.



Safeguarding in our Parishes means ...

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle has an abiding commitment to promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

If you have any concerns for a child or vulnerable adult please contact the Office of Safeguarding: by phoning 4979 1390 or emailing childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au.

Visit the Office of Safeguarding website for further information www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au