



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 7 MAY 2023

5TH SUNDAY OF EASTER, YEAR A

Parish Staff

Fr Andrew Doohan (*Parish Priest*)
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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

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Scripture Commentary

Dianne Bergant

The first reading for this Sunday paints a picture of the early Christian community quite different from those of preceding Sundays. Earlier we saw a community that was of one mind and one heart. Today we observe tension. Hellenists and Hebrews are divided over the lack of care given Greek widows. This was a practical matter, not a point of doctrine. The reading draws the lines of authority that existed within the community. Peter does not stand as sole leader. Instead, the entire group of apostles addresses the problem. They distinguish between various ministries and they appoint members who will meet the needs brought before them. Furthermore, the community selects those who will exercise the ministry, and the apostles commission them.

Today's responsorial psalm opens with an invocation to praise God for the blessings of creation and the care shown to human beings. God is acclaimed as trustworthy and God's word is as firm as is God's own self. It was by this word alone that the universe was created. The psalmist moves from consideration of covenant commitment to that of divine providence. God cares for all who fear the Lord, who stand in awe of and wonder at God's great power and majesty. The Lord looks upon the people, presumably with eyes of compassion and love. Finally, God is characterised as a saviour, one who will deliver them and preserve them in the face of great need.

Using an image from construction, the author of 1 Peter develops both a Christological theme and

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.

an ecclesiological one. He characterises both Christ and Christians as living stones. He seems to be saying that by coming to Christ, the living stone, Christians, as living stones themselves, are built into a spiritual house. Despite being the living stone that gives life, Christ was rejected by human beings. Though so rejected, Christ was chosen by God to be the cornerstone of the building that is constructed out of the living stones that are the Christians. As such, Christ becomes the focus of judgment. Those who believe in him are not put to shame, but those who reject him will stumble in darkness.

In the gospel Jesus develops two major theological themes: eschatology and Christology. First, Jesus seeks to strengthen his followers, who appear to be troubled at the thought of his departure. He does not conceal it, but he interprets it in a very positive way. He is indeed leaving, but he is going to the dwelling place of God and he promises to return to get them so that they can be together again. Jesus does not focus on the end of his life, only on the joyful events that will follow it. If his death is his departure and his resurrection is his return, then his union with his followers is the mutual indwelling enjoyed in this life by those united with him.

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Morning Tea at Clarence Town

The next morning tea in Clarence Town will take place today (7 May) after the 8am Mass. Please stay and join us for good food, good company, and good conversation.

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.

MISSION: Transform Lives—theirs...and yours

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Alleluia!!

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/.

Service NSW Returning to Clarence Town

The Service NSW Mobile Service Centre is coming again to Clarence Town on **Wednesday 17 May** between 10am and 3pm.

The Mobile Service Centre offers a range of services right on your doorstep—rather than having to travel out of town.

The Mobile Service Centre will be located outside the School of Arts, 48 Grey Street.

Please remember that the Mobile Service Centre is a cashless facility—payments can be made via credit/debit cards or cheques.

The Liturgy of the Word—Part 1

The Liturgy of the Word is one of the two major divisions in the celebration of Mass, and also features in many of the other liturgical rites of the Church, e.g., the celebration of Baptism, Funerals that do not involve Mass, Confirmation, etc.

The Liturgy of the Word is focussed on the Ambo, one of the two tables from which we are fed each and every time we gather (the other being the Altar).

The word 'ambo' has its origins in a Greek word that refers to a raised desk or pulpit. It should not be confused with the word 'lectern', which usually refers to a more temporary device (such as the one I use near the chair).

So what constitutes the Liturgy of the Word? The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM)*, says this:

The main part of the Liturgy of the Word is made up of the readings from Sacred Scripture together with the chants occurring between them.

As for the Homily, the Profession of Faith and the Universal Prayer, they develop and conclude it. For in the readings, as explained by the Homily, God speaks to his people, opening up to them the mystery of redemption and salvation, and offering spiritual nourishment; and Christ himself is present through his word in the midst of the faithful.

By silence and by singing, the people make this divine word their own, and affirm their adherence to it by means of the Profession of Faith; finally, having been nourished by the divine word, the people pour out their petitions by means of the Universal Prayer for the needs of the whole Church and for the salvation of the whole world. (n.55)

At Sunday Masses, there are three main readings from Sacred Scripture—the First Reading from the Old Testament (except during the Season of Easter, when it comes from the Acts of the Apostles), the Second Reading from the non-Gospel New Testament, and then the Gospel. In between the First Reading and the Second Reading, we have a Responsorial Psalm (ideally sung, but there's always exceptions), and between the Second Reading and the Gospel we have the Gospel Acclamation. After the Gospel, we move through the Homily, the Profession of Faith, and the Universal Prayer in quick succession.

So what appears to be missing?

What often gets overlooked in the celebration of

the Liturgy of the Word is silence.

The *GIRM* has this to say about the role of silence during the celebration of the Liturgy of the Word:

The Liturgy of the Word is to be celebrated in such a way as to favour meditation, and so any kind of haste such as hinders recollection is clearly to be avoided. In the course of it, brief periods of silence are also appropriate, accommodated to the assembled congregation; by means of these, under the action of the Holy Spirit, the Word of God may be grasped by the heart and a response through prayer may be prepared. It may be appropriate to observe such periods of silence, for example, before the Liturgy of the Word begins, after the First and Second Reading, and lastly at the conclusion of the Homily. (n.56)

How are such brief silences achieved? That all depends on those who are proclaiming the readings in the first place, and yet are simply done.

For example, the silence before the Liturgy of the Word begins can easily be achieved by the first reader waiting until everyone is seated before moving from their own seat to the Ambo. It's a small change, but allows for silence to be observed.

The silence after the First Reading is easily achieved by the reader inserting a short pause (perhaps a slow count to ten by way of example) before moving on to lead the Responsorial Psalm. When the Psalm is sung, in part or in full, the musicians can likewise insert a short pause before beginning. A similar practice can be adopted by the reader proclaiming the Second Reading. When the Gospel Acclamation is being sung, in part or in full, the Second Reader does not need to stay at the Ambo; and the musicians can insert the pause before they begin the Gospel Acclamation.

Another way of avoiding undue haste during the Liturgy of the Word, particularly when two different readers are involved, is for them to move to the Ambo separately rather than together, with the second reader not moving from their own seat until the first reader (who may also have led the Psalm) has returned to their seat.

These are minor changes, but ones which are in keeping with the nature of the Liturgy of the Word and our need to be nourished from this first table before we move on to the second.

To be continued...

The Parish Diary (for the week ahead)

4th Week of Easter

Monday 8 May

Tuesday 9 May

Wednesday 10 May

5.30pm Mass @ Dungog

Thursday 11 May

9.30am Mass @ East Gresford

Friday 12 May

9.30am Mass @ Dungog (where the students from St Joseph's will join us)

Saturday 13 May

Sunday 14 May

6th Sunday of Easter

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

11.30am Mass @ Summer Hill



In Your Charity, Please Pray for:

Those Who Have Died: Michael Flanagan, Paul Cooper.

Those Whose Anniversary of Death Is In May: Ray Johnson, Danny Robertson, Eileen Moylan, Nita Ford, Mary Kealy, Ted McFadyen, Evelyn Martin, Clarke Deards, Don Trow, Margaret Smith, Alvin Robertson, Carmel Hudson, Steve Bartlett, Fr Peter Williams, Ian Tope, Dulcie Hepworth, Jenny Szymec, Catherine Atkins, Irene Byron, Bill & Hannah Byron, Helen Cooper, Rodney Ryan, Gordon Ryan, Joyce Little, Jan Graboski, Betty Vell, Cecilia Catherine Wilson.

*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, Graham McCarthy.

Today's Liturgy:

1st Reading Acts 6:1-7

Psalm Ps 32:

Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in you.

2nd Reading 1 Peter 2:4-9

Acclamation John 14:6

Alleluia, alleluia!

I am the way, the truth, and the life, says the Lord; no one comes to the Father, except through me. Alleluia!

Gospel John 14:1-12

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 May:

"We pray that Church movements and groups may rediscover their mission of evangelisation each day, placing their own charisms at the service of needs in the world."

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

It is for the best...

At the time of this gospel's writing, some 70 years after the events it describes, amazing things have taken place in the early Christian community. Rather than everything falling apart with the death of Jesus, the message of Jesus has spread further than he himself could ever have accomplished. It is the departure of Jesus from their midst and the sending of the Spirit that really prompts the disciples to act on what they had experienced while Jesus lived among them. The gospel writer has Jesus saying that he has to go away so that the disciples can reach their potential.

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