



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 27 AUGUST 2023

21ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR A

Parish Staff

Fr Andrew Doohan (*Parish Priest*)
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

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

Safeguarding Promotion

For all safeguarding concerns within the parishes, please contact Fr Andrew in the first instance at the Parish Office (or mobile in emergencies).

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...

It's now less than one week before I head off on annual leave, and 'fly the coop' (so to speak) to the United States to celebrate my nephew's wedding and spend some time with my family.

As far as is possible, everything has been put in place to enable that life here in the Parish will continue 'as normal' during my absence.

I regret to advise that I have been unable to arrange for a priest to celebrate the Masses here on the weekends of Sunday 17 September or Sunday 24 September.

On those weekends, for those who wish to attend Mass there is the option of travelling to Raymond Terrace or one of the parishes of the Chisholm area. For details of those opportunities, you can visit bit.ly/3E7xeqG or bit.ly/45GDjWN.

Here in the Catholic Parishes of Dungog & Gresford, there will be lay-led Sunday Celebrations of the Word at the same time and locations as we would normally gathered.

While obviously not the same as gathering to celebrate Eucharist, such celebrations are recognised within the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle as an alternative to attending Mass when Mass is not possible.

I am told that there members of our parish community who have some experience in leading such liturgies. I would be most grateful if they could assist again those two weekends—and if they need any assistance from me, then please don't hesitate to get in touch with me...

...though you'll need to be quick as I leave on Friday!

Have a blessed week...

Fr Andrew

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)

Gospel of Mark

The Gospel of Mark is a treasure trove for the nurturing and nourishing of our faith. Mark brings us face-to-face with the One who came to serve and not to be served, to give his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45).

Explore the Gospel of Mark with Dr Debra Snoddy, a lecturer in biblical studies at the Catholic Institute of Sydney a partner of the University of Notre Dame Australia. As we look forward to the year when the Gospel of Mark takes pride of place in our liturgy, Debra promises to inform you, nourish you and challenge you to hear Mark's words in ways old and new.

The day will include an overview of the Gospel and a detailed treatment of some of the most illuminating texts from the Gospel of Mark.

Date: 15 November, Murray Room, 9.30am – 3.00pm. To register visit bit.ly/3sro6dO.

'Come Rest A While' Reflection Day

In appreciation and interested Christian Initiation ministers, 'Come rest a while' is an opportunity to listen, reflect, and get to know other ministers. This year's reflection day will take place on **Saturday 9 September** at Charlestown, commencing at 10am and finishing 3.30pm. Morning tea and lunch is provided.

More details and registration is available at bit.ly/44BV6hM.

For enquiries or registration assistance, contact Sharon Murphy: phone 4979 1134, or email sharon.murphy@mn.catholic.org.au

Make A Difference During August

CatholicCare's Community Kitchens offer more than just a meal. With the assistance of volunteers, CatholicCare has created a space where people can feel safe and enjoy the company of others and access other services if needed.

CatholicCare asks you to consider making a gift to their *Make a Difference Appeal* to assist in continuing to feed and connect people through CatholicCare's Community Kitchens and other non-funded programs.

CatholicCare's programs really do make a difference in the local community, but they cannot do this work without the generosity of the broader community. A tax-deductible donation will go a long way.

Donating is easy and only takes a few simple steps. Visit www.mycause.com.au/page/318856/make-a-difference.

Catholic Theological College—Information Session Online

The Catholic Theological College offers an Graduate Certificate in Teaching Meditation, a three unit course that can be complete online.

The course is designed for those seeking to learn the methods and skills of teaching meditation and meditative prayer in a variety of situations including primary and secondary schools, parishes, hospitals and other settings.

The course includes the history and practice of meditation and *lectio divina* and provides an opportunity for students to reflect on their own spiritual gifts.

An online information session will take place on Monday 4 September at 7.30pm. Registration for the session is essential and can be made by going to bit.ly/3qzMTfh. More information about the Graduate Certificate can be found by going to bit.ly/3OVhahR.

The Catholic Parishes of Dungog & Gresford recognize we stand upon the traditional country of Gringai clan of the Worimi people, who have walked upon and cared for this country for thousands of years.

We acknowledge their cultural heritage, beliefs and deep spiritual attachment and relationship to this country. We pay our respects to their Elders—past, present, and emerging—and commit ourselves to working together for reconciliation and justice.

Homily by Richard Leonard

A furore broke out in a country diocese some years ago about the retreat style of priest who was taking Catholic students in their last year of high school or who were attending university away for weekend retreats. On the Friday night of the retreat this priest would tell the young people that by the end of the weekend they should make a decision about their Christian faith.

Some parents were shocked that their young people were given an ultimatum that included the possibility of rejecting their faith. The priest replied that Catholic youth have to make all sorts of decisions regarding career, lifestyle, residence, studies and relationships. Religion, he contended, often fell by the wayside, either not important enough on which to make a decision, or relegated to the personal shelf of neglect to be possibly taken down and dusted off years later for a hatching, matching or dispatching.

The priest argued that this wasn't good enough. After 12 years of Catholic education or many years of catechetics the Church had to take the risk of calling for a personal decision for faith. Some of the young people consciously chose membership in the Church. In making such a profession of faith many reported having a deep encounter with God and an experience of their faith in Christ. Other students made decisions against belonging to the Church, which is, of course, never irrevocable.

The entire retreat process was based on the question in today's Gospel: 'Who do you say that I am?'

The disciples, reflecting on their experiences with Jesus, offer various possibilities, but it is Peter who says that Jesus is the revelation of God for the world. This is the great profession of faith and the basis on which the Church comes into being.

And what was true then, is true now. At some point, if we want our faith to move from being a code of law, a concept, or some excellent ideas to something we can experience, we must take the faith of the Church, which has nurtured us up to now, and make it our own. In doing so, when we encounter Christ, we contribute to the re-founding of the Church in our generation.

Just being part of the 'Catholic crowd' is hardly the challenge Jesus presents to the disciples in today's Gospel. We are commissioned like the disciples to bear witness to Christ's personal love in the workplace, with our friends and in our families.

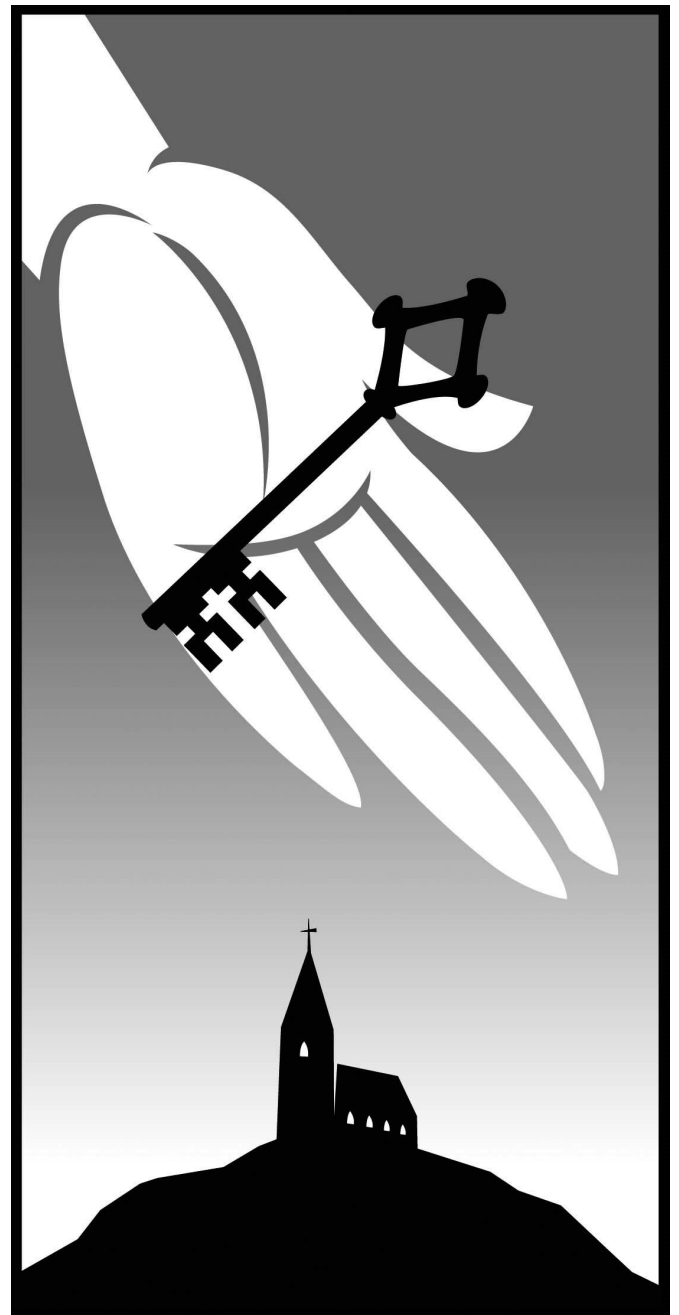
It's always helpful to be reminded that we might be the only face of Catholicism, or even Christianity, that another person may encounter.

The way in which we bind them up or set them free might be the measure by which they judge if the Church is the face of Christ in today's world and whether they could find a home with us.

And it all hinges on that great question which is asked of each of us today: 'Who do you say that I am?' How we answer this question reveals so much, including whether Christ is an idea we like, or the object of our passion.

© Richard Leonard SJ

Richard Leonard SJ is the Director of the Australian Catholic Office for Film and Broadcasting, is a member of the Australian Catholic Media Council and a film critic for all the major Australian Catholic newspapers. He completed a PhD in cinema studies at the University of Melbourne. He lectures in cinema and theology at the Jesuit College of Spirituality and has been a visiting lecturer in Australian cinema at the University of Melbourne, a visiting scholar within the School of Theatre, Film and Television at UCLA and is visiting professor at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. He is an Honorary Fellow of the Australian Catholic University, has lectured widely and is the author of numerous books.



The Parish Diary (for the week ahead)

21st Week in Ordinary Time

Monday 28 August

Memorial of St Augustine

Tuesday 29 August

Memorial of the Passion of St John the Baptist

Wednesday 30 August

5.30pm Mass @ Dungog

Thursday 31 August

9.30am Mass @ East Gresford

Friday 1 September

Saturday 2 September

5.30pm Mass @ East Gresford

Sunday 3 September

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

Today's Liturgy:

1st Reading Isaiah 22:19-23

Psalm Psalm 137

Lord, your love is eternal; do not forsake the work of your hands.

2nd Reading Romans 11:33-36

Acclamation Matthew 16:18

Alleluia, alleluia!

You are Peter, the rock on which I will build my Church; the gates of hell will not hold out against it.

Alleluia!

Gospel Matthew 16:13-20

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 August: "We pray the World Youth Day in Lisbon will help young people to live and witness the Gospel in their own lives."

Morning Tea at Clarence Town

The next morning tea at Clarence Town will be held after the 8am Mass next Sunday (1 September). Please bring a place to share, and stay and join us for good food, good company, and good 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.



Have you thought?

What's in a name?

On many occasions in the Bible a character is given, or takes on, a new name when they take on a new role or move to a new level in their faith and relationship with God. Abram became Abraham; Sarai became Sarah; Jacob became Israel; and Saul became Paul. In all of these circumstances the person took on a new name to reflect their new relationship with God. This tradition has continued right to this day. Men and women entering religious life have traditionally taken on a new name to indicate the new life they are entering. When Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger became pope he took on the name Benedict to indicate the new role and the new life he was beginning.

In Your Charity, Please Pray for:

Those Who Have Died:

Those Whose Anniversary of Death Is In August: Luxton Walker, Connie Gibson, Gladys Garner, Selena Smith, Mary Sonter, Margaret Muddle, Fay Farrow, Barbara King, Reg West, Harrison Walters, Jack Jordan, Jean Taylor, Jim Riches, Ron Jones, Margaret Kelly, Joan McMullen, Lou Dillon, Terry Shiel, John Rose, Norma Preece, Laurie Williams, Denis Cavanough, Margaret French, Jean Kenney, Shirley Wade, Allen Kearns, Tony Townsend, Molly Turner.

Those Who Are Sick: Maryann Smith, 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, Peter Rooke, Graham McCarthy, Matthew Kerr.