



# Dungog & Gresford Parishes

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE

**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.

## 2ND SUNDAY OF LENT, YEAR B 25 FEBRUARY 2024

### Parish Staff

Fr Andrew Doohan (*Parish Priest*)  
Deacon Solomon Okovido (*In Residence*)  
Kerry Copus (*Parish Secretary*)

### Presbytery & Parish Office

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### Office Hours

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### Other Contacts

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Gresford Faith Banister  
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### Parish School

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

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**Parish Bulletin** is published each Sunday. Items for inclusion should be received at the Parish Office by 5pm on Wednesdays. Copies of the Bulletin are available from the Parish website which is updated weekly.

**Parish Website** is updated regularly with copies of the bulletin and other information, and is found at [www.dungoggresfordcatholic.org.au](http://www.dungoggresfordcatholic.org.au).

**Safeguarding Promotion** For all safeguarding concerns within the parishes, please contact Fr Andrew.

### A Pastoral Note...

As we rapidly approach the end of February, there are a number of things that will need to be attended to in the coming months, just as part of carrying out 'business as usual'.

One of them, at least, requires a decision to be made, a decision that must be made by the communities of the two parishes as a whole.

Every year, sometime during April, parishes need to order new sets of planned giving envelopes for use in the following financial year.

The question that needs to be answered, however, is whether the days of small parishes like ours using planned giving envelopes have now run their course.

With the breaking of links between the planned giving system and the parish funding of school building programs, there is now very little parish-based expenditure that can be used in calculating the percentage of giving that can be claimed in your tax return.

Over the years there have been attempts to find other ways of providing access to some amount of tax deduction but those opportunities are rapidly diminishing.

On the flip side, the costs associated with providing the envelopes steadily increases thanks to inflation, which is not to mention the administrative costs associated with keeping track of individual giving, the production of tax receipts, and other associated costs. All of which eats into the amount that you so generously provide to support the Parishes and their undertakings.

So what am I actually suggesting?

I am not suggesting that we do away with collections—we have to keep the lights on in the church and make we have bread and wine for the celebration of Mass after all. Both of our parishes will continue to have expenses that need

to be paid.

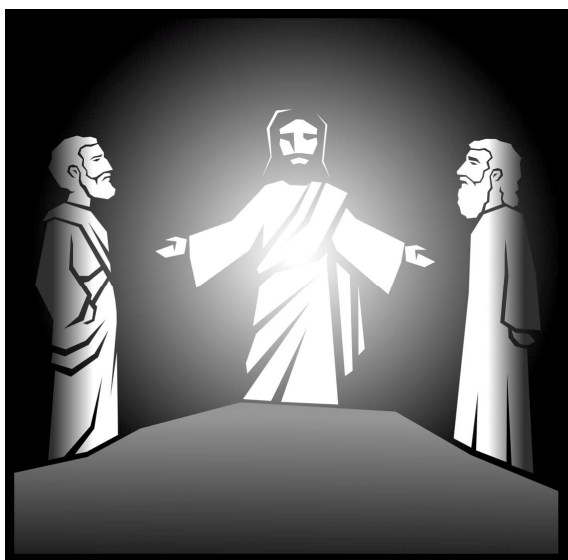
What I am suggesting, however, is that we don't reorder planned giving envelopes for the 2024-2025 financial year, that we stop recording individual giving contributions, and that we stop offering the very small tax deduction that we currently offer on those contributions.

Like the conversation about changing Mass times for which we had our parish meeting this weekend, the kind of decision that I'm speaking of needs prayerful reflection and a decision that we can live with.

To that end, I propose a meeting on Saturday 23 March to discuss discontinuing our planned giving system. The meeting will take place at St Mary's at 9.30am.

Have a blessed week...

*Fr Andrew*



### **World Day of Prayer 2024**

**Gresford:** St Mary's Anglican Church, Allynbrook (844 Allyn River Road, Allynbrook) on Thursday 29 February 2024 commencing at 10.30am.

All are invited to attend and you are invited to bring lunch to share in the church hall.

**Dungog:** Dungog Uniting Church, Dowling Street, Dungog on Friday 1 March 2024 commencing at 7pm.

All are invited to attend and are invited to bring a plate to share afterwards in the church hall.

The Catholic Parishes of Dungog & Gresford acknowledge the Gringai clan of the Worimi people and their deep and abiding attachment to the land on which we live and work.

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

### **Advance Notice—The Bishop Is Coming!**

I've been advised that Bishop Michael will be making his long-awaited visit to the two parishes of Dungog & Gresford in late April. More details to come!

### **Children's Sacramental Initiation 2024**

Children wishing to complete their journey to full Christian Initiation are now able to begin that journey for 2024.

All the information required—including the online enrolment form—can be found on our website at [bit.ly/3NUMAv7](https://bit.ly/3NUMAv7).

The celebration of Confirmation for this cohort will take place during October 2024, with the precise date to be communicated once available.

For children who might not yet be baptised, or who were baptised in other church traditions, the journey is slightly different and will require some additional steps. The best place to start a conversation about this is by contacting Fr Andrew.

Please pass this information on to anyone who might find it helpful.

### **Coming Soon—Confirmation!**

The first celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation for 2024 will take place on **Thursday, 18 April** for those candidates who enrolled in the journey last year. More details to follow!

This celebration is not just for the candidates and their families but is one for all the parish community. It would be wonderful to have the church full as we celebrate this significant moment in the life of the children of our parish.

### **Christian Initiation and Confirmation Review**

You are invited to take part in a review of the Ministry of Christian Initiation and a reflection on the celebration of Confirmation.

The review has been structured so that all parish ministers, parents, parishioners, sponsors and others can take part.

To find out more, go to [bit.ly/497Y1RA](https://bit.ly/497Y1RA).

### **Dungog Lenten Group**

Mark Wilson will facilitate a Lenten Group gathering in Dungog during Lent. We extend our thanks to Mark for his generosity in coordinating and facilitating this opportunity.

The group will meet on the **Tuesdays of Lent** (from 20 February) in St Mary's, Dungog. Each meeting will commence at **7pm** and will conclude with the Stations of the Cross.

## Opportunities Outside The Parish

### Art and Spirituality Workshop

Creation of art provides an opportunity for a deepening awareness of oneself and the world, and can act as a catalyst for evoking the Spirit. Art is a means to see-to-re-search and find the living meaning of what it means to open the heart. Everyone has the ability to create art, but in order for it to be theological, the artist needs to explore ways that it makes sense of faith. Opening the heart through art involves making meaning through the creation, then reflecting on the art itself and the unfolding the moment-to-moment direct experience of the process.

This workshop will provide an opportunity to awaken the Spirit through the beauty of God's creation, prayer, and reflection. Participants will engage in art making experiences which will nourish their faith.

Date: Thursday 14 March (9am-3pm)

Venue: Kilaben Bay Community Centre

Cost: \$25 per person

Register at [bit.ly/48atjG2](http://bit.ly/48atjG2)

### Way of the Cross

Our Diocese is blessed with rich diversity. This year's Ecumenical Way of the Cross, held on the 5th Sunday of Lent, invites us into a multicultural journey of remembrance. As we relive the story of Jesus' Passion, we recall the stories that have brought us together. This event is a celebrated gathering of our wider community and one not to be missed.

When: Sunday 17 March, 3pm (you are invited to gather from 2pm)

Where: St Joseph's Toronto Church, 140 Wangi Road, Toronto.

# Repent!

## Draft Easter Timetable

It may be only the First Sunday of Lent, but already the diocesan offices are asking parishes to confirm the times of our celebrations of the Easter Triduum. Yeah, I know!

So the timetable below is a DRAFT for which I seek feedback and comment. We need to send a final timetable by **Tuesday 5 March** so we need to get to a final solution by Sunday 3 March.

### Holy Thursday

Evening Mass 7pm Dungog

### Good Friday

Stations of the Cross 10am Dungog  
East Gresford  
Clarence Town  
Solemn Celebration 3pm Dungog

### Holy Saturday

Easter Vigil 8pm Dungog

### Easter Sunday

Sunday Mass 8am Clarence Town  
10am East Gresford

The pattern above mirrors last year's pattern, with the obvious exception of the change to the start time of the Easter Vigil. As previously mentioned, we are obliged to wait until darkness falls (7.44pm) before we can begin. We come across this problem every few years when Easter is early and daylight savings time has not ended.

Your thoughts and comments would be very much appreciated.

Fr Andrew



## Second Sunday of Lent 24 & 25 February



After the birth of her children, 22 year old **Ronita** was at risk of having to leave school permanently. But, with the support of Caritas Australia's partners in the Philippines, she resumed her studies and secured a job at a call centre to support her family

**Please donate to Project Compassion.**

Together we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow *for all future generations*.

You can donate through Project Compassion donation boxes and envelopes available from your parish, by visiting [caritas.org.au/project-compassion](http://caritas.org.au/project-compassion) or by calling 1800 024 413.

## The Parish Diary (for the week ahead)

2nd Week of Lent

Monday 26 February

Tuesday 27 February

Wednesday 28 February

5.30pm Mass @ Dungog

Thursday 29 February

10.30am World Day of Prayer @ St Mary's  
Anglican Church, Allynbrook

Friday 1 March

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

11am Anointing Mass @ Lara Aged Care

7pm World Day of Prayer @ Dungog  
Uniting Church

Saturday 2 March

5.30pm Mass @ East Gresford

Sunday 3 March

Third Sunday of Lent

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

## Today's Liturgy:

**1st Reading** Genesis 22:1-2, 9-13, 15-18

**Psalm** Psalm 115

I will walk in the presence of the Lord, in the land  
of the living.

**2nd Reading** Romans 8:31-34

**Acclamation** Matthew 17:5

Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

From the shining cloud the Father's voice is heard:  
this is my beloved Son, hear him.

Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

**Gospel** Mark 9:2-10

**Memorial Acclamation**

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

## Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for February:

*"Let us pray that the sick who are in the final stages of life, and their families, receive the necessary medical and human care and accompaniment."*

## Baptisms This Week

We welcome the **Ginty** brothers, **Flynn, Hugh, and Tully**, together with their family and friends, as we celebrate Christian Initiation for Flynn and Hugh and Baptism for Tully during today's 9.30am Mass at St Mary's.

## In Your Charity, Please Pray for:

### Those Who Have Died:

### Those Whose Anniversary of Death Is In February:

Michael Banister, Barney Hartnett, Edie Raymond, Jeffery Bunt, Eileen Maurer, Alban Maurer, Florence Farah, Lorraine Harris, Allan Turner (Clarence Town), Patricia Byron, Katherine Garrison, Neville Baldwin, Georgeina Richardson, John Holstein, Edward Holstein, Frank Turner, Harrison Meyn Jack Reibel, Ethel Hannan, May Gehrig, Matilda Smith, Hyatt Rose, Kathleen Dickerson, Bernie Holstein, Terry Johnson

**Those Who Are Sick:** Maryann Smith, Daphne Bond, Maree McCulloch, Leonie Young, Lisa Reid, Bev Herbert, Warren Wade, Irene Robinson, Luke Barry, Kathie Maynard, Kevin Ward, David Loudon, Michaela Brown, Phillip Hartup, Ella Rusak, Anne Newman, Graham McCarthy, Keith Edwards, Otilie Sheens, Anton Banister.

## Morning Tea at Clarence Town

The next morning tea at Clarence Town will be held after the 8am Mass next Sunday (3 March). Please bring a plate to share, join us for good food, good company, and good conversation.



## Have you thought? Mountaintop Moments

*Throughout the Bible there are instances of important encounters with God on mountaintops. Even this week's first reading, the sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham, occurs on a mountaintop. It is not the potential sacrifice, but the new relationship between God and Abraham that is a mountaintop moment. In modern language, we often speak about 'peak experiences' - moments of exceptional clarity, intense emotion or extraordinary accomplishment. Sometimes, like Peter, we are tempted to try to remain 'in the moment' rather than using the peak experience as a motivator for when we go back down the mountain to our normal (if perhaps changed) existence.*

## 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.