



# 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.

## EASTER SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION, YEAR B

### 31 MARCH 2024

#### Parish Staff

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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...**

By the time you get to read this column, the Sacred Paschal Triduum will be almost over—and I say over because the Paschal Triduum doesn't conclude until Sunday evening!

On behalf of the entire parish I express my thanks to all who have contributed in any way to the preparations for and the celebration of the various liturgical activities across the last week. The coming together to make our celebrations the best they can be is always a joy to be part of and watch flow.

Of course, our celebration of Easter doesn't conclude with the end of the sacred Three Days. Indeed Easter Day itself continues with the octave thereof until next Sunday, when we shift from Easter Day to the longer Easter Season. And the Easter Season, the season of Resurrection, goes through until the great Solemnity of Pentecost, which this year is celebrated on Sunday 19 May.

At a deeper level, however, Easter never really ends for us. We are a people of the Resurrection; we are an Easter people. And that means that we live in the light of the Resurrection, in the light of Easter, each and every day of our lives.

And in living as an Easter people, we are called to share the Good News of the Resurrection with the world.

May you and those you love have a very happy and holy Easter. Χριστός Ανέστη! (Christ is risen!) Αληθώς Ανέστη! (He is truly risen!)

*Fr Andrew*



### **Daylight Savings Time Ends New Week**

Next Sunday, 7 April, sees the end of Daylight Savings Time for 2024, with our clocks going back an hour at 3 am that morning.

Don't forget to set your clocks back before you head to bed next Saturday night otherwise you might be an hour early for Sunday morning Masses!

### **Change to Weekday Mass Schedule**

A reminder that the new Weekday Mass schedule will begin from Monday 1 April. From that date Mass will be celebrated as follows:

Tuesdays 8.30am St Mary's, Dungog  
Thursdays 9.30am St Helen's, East Gresford

### **Project Compassion Contributions**

Parishioners are invited to return any Project Compassion boxes or other contributions over the period from Holy Thursday to the Second Sunday of Easter. This will allow the finalisation of the returns by the Parish Office ready to send to Caritas Australia.

### **Celebrating the Annunciation**

This year, the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord is transferred to Monday 8 April because of the clash with the Monday of Holy Week (which ranks higher in the table of liturgical days).

A timetable of Masses for the Annunciation will be made available in our bulletin in the coming weeks.

### **Celebration of Confirmation**

The Sacrament of Confirmation for 2024 will be celebrated on **Thursday, 18 April** starting at 6.30pm in St Mary's, Dungog.

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.

### **The Bishop Is Coming!**

Bishop Michael will be visiting our two parishes across the weekend of 27 & 28 April. Bishop Michael will be celebrating the three parish Masses as an opportunity to 'meet & greet' parishioners.

We'll organise an opportunity for a 'cuppa' or similar informal gathering after each of the Masses so Bishop Michael has a chance to get to know us.

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.

## Homily by Fr Richard Leonard SJ

A man was driving along the road when he saw the Easter Bunny hop into his lane. He swerved to avoid hitting the bunny, but couldn't do so. The basket of eggs went everywhere. The driver felt guilty and began to cry. A woman saw the man and pulled over. 'What's wrong?' she asked. 'I accidentally killed the Easter Bunny', he explained. The woman knew exactly what to do. She went to her car, pulled out a spray can, walked over to the bunny, and sprayed the entire contents over the little furry animal. Miraculously the Easter Bunny came back to life, jumped up, picked up his eggs, waved at them and hopped on down the road. Not far away the Easter Bunny stopped, turned around and waved again. He kept doing this for as far as they could see.

The man was astonished. 'What in heaven's name is in that can you sprayed on the Easter Bunny?' The woman showed the man the label. It said: 'Hair spray. Restores life to dead hair. Adds permanent wave.'

For many of our children the bunny and its eggs are the most important thing about Easter. Over the millennia, Christianity has had a gift for domesticating local traditions and festivals, bringing them on board and making them our own. The name Easter comes from the Anglo Saxon spring festival in honour of the goddess Eostre. Her symbol was the rabbit and the giving of eggs were signs of new life bursting forth as winter withdrew. These associations only make sense in the northern hemisphere, but we can see why the early Christians could be so adaptable and inculturated with this local festival.

In both hemispheres Christians today celebrate Jesus being raised from the dead. In the New Testament there are two traditions about how the disciples come to know about Jesus' resurrection: the empty tomb and the apparitions of Christ.

Today's Gospel belongs to the empty tomb tradition. On Magdalene's urging, Peter and John run to the tomb, find it empty and come to at least an initial belief about the resurrection of Jesus.

We do not believe that God simply revived Jesus' corpse in the tomb, as our driver resuscitated the bunny in today's story. Easter Sunday does not celebrate the resuscitation of Jesus, but his Resurrection. We know his 'glorified body' was not the same as his human body because Jesus' presence could be encountered in several places simultaneously and he is reported to walk through walls and to vanish. The link between both resurrection traditions is the importance of Jesus' death. In the empty tomb accounts, as in today's gospel, the writers give us extraordinary details

about the grave clothes. In the apparition narratives there are usually references to Jesus' wounds.

Whatever way they came to experience the Resurrection of Christ, the disciples knew that this was Jesus who actually died and was buried and that their personal encounter was with the one who was crucified.

What God did through the death and resurrection of Jesus is what Christians have done with local customs and festivals ever since: he entered into it, understood it, took it on board, domesticated it and vanquished its power. As a result we believe that God empathises with the full limitations of our human mortality and promises to remain faithful to us in death as he remained utterly faithful to Jesus.

That is why on this day 1,600 years ago St John Chrysostom could say on behalf of us all:

'Hell took a body, and discovered God. It took earth, and encountered Heaven. It took what it saw, and was overcome by what it could not see. O death, where is your sting? O Hell, where is your victory? Christ is Risen, and you, O death, are destroyed! Christ is Risen, and evil is cast down! Christ is Risen, and angels rejoice! Christ is Risen, and new life is set free! Christ is Risen, and the tomb is emptied of its dead; for Christ having risen from the dead, becomes the first-fruit of those who have fallen asleep. To Him be Glory and Power forever and ever. Amen!'

© 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.

## 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](http://bit.ly/3NuMAv7).

The celebration of Confirmation for this cohort will take place on **Friday 25 October 2024** at 6.30pm.

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

## The Parish Diary (for the week ahead)

The Easter Octave

Monday 1 April

Tuesday 2 April

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Wednesday 3 April

Thursday 4 April

9.30am Mass @ East Gresford

Friday 5 April

11am Anointing Mass @ Lara Aged Care

Saturday 6 April

*Holy Saturday*

10.30am Baptism @ Clarence Town

5.30pm Mass @ East Gresford

Sunday 7 April

*Second Sunday of Easter*

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

## Today's Liturgy: (for Sunday morning only)

**1st Reading** Acts 10:34, 37-43

**Psalm** Psalm 117

This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad

**2nd Reading** 1 Corinthians 5:6-8

**Acclamation** 1 Corinthians 5:7-8

Alleluia, alleluia!

Christ has become our paschal sacrifice; let us feast with joy in the Lord  
Alleluia!

**Gospel** Mark 16:1-7

**Memorial Acclamation**

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

## Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for March: "Let

us pray that those who risk their lives for the Gospel in various parts of the world might imbue the Church with their courage and missionary drive."

## Baptisms This Week

We welcome, **Maycee Quirk**, together with her family and friends, as we celebrate her Baptism next Saturday at 10.30am in St Patrick's, Clarence Town.

# Alleluia!!

## 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, 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, 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, Anne Newman, Graham McCarthy, Keith Edwards, Otilie Sheens, Anton Banister, Lyn Kerr.

## Morning Tea at Clarence Town

The next morning tea at Clarence Town will be held after the 8am Mass next Sunday (7 April). Please bring a plate to share, and join us for good food, good company, and good conversation.

# HISTORICAL CONTEXT

## Mary Magdalene

Mary Magdalene, or Mary of Magdala, plays an important role in the gospel accounts of the resurrection. She was obviously a significant follower of Jesus, being named as a witness to the crucifixion, discovering the empty tomb and the first to encounter the risen Christ. One would think that she would hold a prestigious place in the Church, but for many years she was confused with another character identified in the gospels and was portrayed as a prostitute and sinner. Mary is named in each of the four gospels and not once is it indicated that she was a sinner or prostitute. She has been a victim of mistaken identity for 2000 years.

## Opportunities Outside The Parish

### Sing to the Lord

*Sing to the Lord* is a cantor training and formation opportunity for all members of the faithful. We are looking for everyone who loves to sing and would like to have a go. To find out more and express interest [bit.ly/4ahroBg](http://bit.ly/4ahroBg).