



# 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.

## THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER, YEAR B

### 14 APRIL 2024

#### Parish Staff

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

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#### Parish School

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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...

And so another school term comes to an end, and I hope that both students and teachers will find the next two weeks a chance to stop and catch their collective breaths before launching into Term 2.

Regretfully the new kindergarten classroom will not be ready to be occupied at the beginning of the new term, an outcome that means parishioners will be without access to that space for meetings, morning teas, and the other activities that have usually taken place therein.

The latest information from the builders indicates that the 'new' completion date is towards the end of May, a date that is less weather dependent now that the shell has been constructed and the roof completed.

To say I am disappointed by this development would be understatement, and I have expressed that disappointment to the 'powers that be' within the diocesan offices. I can well understand the difficulties and unexpected developments that can cause delays in building projects—but the new classroom was initially approved in late 2022 and originally promised for delivery in time for the end of the 2023 school year! I think the saying goes "Not happy, Jan!"

In expressing that disappointment, however, I was sure to direct towards those responsible, which was not our school community. I am grateful that the relationship between the parish and the parish school is such that we are able to offer them the use of the hall. I have to say that such arrangements might not be possible in some parts of the diocese—but not here.

We look forward to the completion of the building project.

And speaking of our parish school, don't forget that some of the children of our parish who are also students of that school will celebrate their

Confirmation this week (see notice opposite). Such celebrations are always wonderful occasions in the life of a parish community, and I hope I will see some of our parishioners come along to be part of that celebration to pray and to witness to the significance of this occasion for the whole parish not just the children being confirmed.

And lastly, a clarification from last week's column: as reported, at this point in time I have been appointed as Administrator of Gloucester Parish but not (yet) of Krambach Parish.

There are other conversations taking place around Krambach and the outcome of those conversations will determine what role, if any, I might have in that parish.

That will teach me to read formal decrees from the Bishop before I write things in the bulletin!

Have a blessed week . . .

Fr Andrew

## SCRIPTURAL CONTEXT

### Post-resurrection accounts

*All four gospels include post-resurrection appearances of the risen Jesus. The gospel of Mark – historically, the first written – gives the briefest account of the resurrection discovery and it is only in a later addition to the gospel that a post-resurrection account appears. However, by the time the gospel of John was written, some 20-30 years later, the theological importance of the resurrection had gained more significance as it became more obvious that Jesus' return to the world was not going to happen within the foreseeable future. The gospel of John devotes two whole chapters to the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus.*

### Is It Time To Reintroduce Collections?

The advent of COVID way back when brought a number of changes when we were eventually able to reopen our churches.

One of those was not passing the collection plates from hand to hand, and instead leaving them somewhere convenient for people to place their donations in.

It's been suggested that it might be time to bring back the former practice—and so your feedback on whether we should or shouldn't would be very much appreciated by the end of April.

### Celebration of Confirmation—This Week!

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

The celebration of Confirmation is an important occasion in the life of the entire parish community, not just for the candidates and their families.

It would be wonderful for our church to be full as we celebrate this important event in the life of the children of our parishes, and the parishes themselves.

Please come along and celebrate!

### 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. There'll be an opportunity to share a 'cuppa' with Bishop Michael after each of our Sunday Masses:

**East Gresford:** after Mass, we will adjourn to the Gresford Bowls Sport & Recreation Club, where you can join Bishop Michael for a drink or a meal in the bistro.

**Clarence Town:** we'll share a 'cuppa' in the usual manner after Mass—this will be in place of the usual morning tea on 5 May.

**Dungog:** we'll share a 'cuppa' in the usual manner after Mass—this will be place of the usual morning tea on 21 April.

### 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 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

Sometimes the lectionary cuts a gospel story off too soon. Today we hear from the last chapter of Luke's Gospel where there are four accounts of how the disciples came to believe in the resurrection of Jesus. In the first two stories Mary Magdalene and then Peter come to see that Jesus has been raised from the dead because they found his tomb empty. The third story is set on the Road to Emmaus. Today's gospel is where Jesus appears to the apostles and disciples en masse, but it finishes at verse 48. In the next few verses Jesus tells the disciples that he is sending them out to be his witnesses in the world, and then he ascends to the Father.

The Church finishes the passage early because it does not want to pre-empt the feast of the Ascension, but by doing so it does the story an injustice. We are used to hearing how the Road to Emmaus mirrors what we do here at Mass each Sunday. But if we include Luke chapter 24, verses 49 to 50, then we can see that today's Gospel does the same thing. The verbs tell the story. In today's Gospel Jesus is present to the disciples; he gives himself to them to be seen and held; he eats with them; teaches them about the scriptures; and he commissions them to go out.

As a result of that first Easter we gather here each Sunday to remember and make Easter present again. This is the reason, for example, we talk about the 40 days of Lent when in fact there are 45 days from Ash Wednesday to the Easter Vigil. In or outside the Easter season Sundays are always days of the Resurrection. And just like the first Easter Sunday we believe that Christ continues to invite us here; to teach us about how to understand the scriptures and live them out in our daily lives; is present to us, to have and to hold, in his Word, this community, the presider and in a special way in the Eucharistic meal; and that he sends us out to proclaim his saving love with heroic joy.

To enable us to do all this we receive the same gift Jesus gave the first disciples as well, the gift of peace. But sometimes we have to get creative about how we achieve it, like the old man who purchased a retirement home near a high school. He spent the first few weeks in peace and contentment. Then a new school year began. The very next afternoon three young men came down his street beating merrily on every rubbish bin they encountered. The crashing percussion continued day after day, until finally the old man decided to take some action. The next afternoon, he walked out to meet the young percussionists. He called out, 'You kids are a lot of fun. Will you do me a favour? I'll give you each a dollar if you'll promise to come around every day and do your

thing.' The kids were elated and continued to do a bang-up job on the rubbish bins. A few days later, the retiree approached them again, 'Look' he said. 'I haven't received my pension cheque this month, so I'm not going to be able to give you more than 25 cents. Will that be okay?' '25 cents?' the drum leader exclaimed. 'If you think we're going to waste our time beating these bins for 25 cents, you're nuts! No way, mister. We quit!' And the old man enjoyed peace and quiet for the rest of his days.

So as Christ sends us forth today, may we be wise about how we can create some happiness and peace around us as well.

© 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.

# Rejoice!!

## Renewing the Dungog Rosters

It's time for a renewal of our liturgical rosters in Dungog!

If you feel called to proclaim the Word of God during our Sunday Masses, or to lead the petitions of the worshipping community during the Universal Prayer, you are invited to participate in a workshop on **Saturday 27 April**.

The workshop will start at 9.30am and last for approximately an hour. It will cover some minor changes to how the Liturgy of the Word will be celebrated, and be an opportunity for any questions to be asked.

We are also looking for more members for our collection and counting team—if this is something you feel able to contribute to, please let Fr Andrew know by the end of April so that you can be included on the roster.

**Please note:** new volunteers will need to undertake the necessary and appropriate diocesan volunteer process. Fr Andrew will assist you in completing this process as needed.

## The Parish Diary (for the week ahead)

Third Week of Easter

Monday 15 April

Tuesday 16 April

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Wednesday 17 April

Thursday 18 April

9.30am Mass @ East Gresford

6.30pm Confirmation @ Dungog

Friday 19 April

Saturday 20 April

10am Baptism @ Dungog

5.30pm Mass @ East Gresford

Sunday 21 April

Fourth Sunday of Easter

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

## Today's Liturgy:

**1st Reading** Acts 3:13-15, 17-19

**Psalm** Psalm 4  
Lord, let your face shine on us

**2nd Reading** 1 John 2:1-5

**Acclamation** Cf Luke 24:32

Alleluia, alleluia!

Lord Jesus, make your word plain to us:  
make our hearts burn with love when you speak.  
Alleluia!

**Gospel** Luke 24:35-48

### Memorial Acclamation

When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup,  
we proclaim your Death, O Lord,  
until you come again.

## Baptisms This Week

We welcome **Saoirse Bartlett-Shea**, together with her family and friends, as we celebrate her Baptism next Saturday at 10am in St Mary's, Dungog.



## Have you thought? Is 'Literal' wrong?

*Is there really something intrinsically wrong about a literal interpretation of scripture? Not at all! It is indeed an essential tool of any scriptural interpretation. It is of course important that we first and foremost understand the text as it is written - we have to have a literal understanding of the words that are used and what they mean. The problem arises when this is as far as we go. If we stop at this stage then we are shutting ourselves off from the richness of the scriptures. If we fail to dig below the surface then we are denying ourselves the opportunity of scrutinising our lives in the light of the scripture.*

# Alleluia!!

**Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for April:** "Let us pray that the dignity and worth of women be recognised in every culture, and for an end to the discrimination they face in various parts of the world."

## In Your Charity, Please Pray for:

### Those Who Have Died:

### 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, Lyn Barry, Michael Flanagan, Paul Cooper.

**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, Neville Barry.

## Safeguarding in our Parishes means ...

The Parishes of Dungog & Gresford hold that children, young people and vulnerable adults are a gift from God with an intrinsic right to dignity of life, respect and security from physical and emotional harm. They are to be treasured, nurtured and safeguarded.

In line with the Safeguarding Policy of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle, our parishes have zero tolerance for all forms of abuse and are committed to safeguarding all who interact with the parishes through our activities, ministries and services, especially children and adults at risk.