



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.

22ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR B

1 SEPTEMBER 2024

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

Emergency contact for Fr Andrew: 0412 405 671

Office Hours

Tuesdays & Fridays, 10am-1pm

Other Contacts

Clarence Town Val Preece
0403 251 434, 4996 4474, or
email vip_1@bigpond.com

Gresford Faith Banister
0427 536 248

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

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.

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

A Pastoral Note...

And I'm back... It only seems like yesterday that I was saying farewell as I departed for Annual Leave, and now I'm back with you and ready for all that is to come.

And there's a lot coming up to be sure.

As I mentioned before I departed, our weekday Mass schedule is renewed from this week with additional opportunities. You can see what's what each week on the back page in the 'Parish Diary' column.

I am going to apologise now that there will be a few 'NO MASS' entries in that column across September, largely because of my involvement in things I had already committed myself to prior to revamping the weekday Mass schedule. Once we get into October I hope such entries will be only occasional and—more often than not—for things I have absolutely no control over.

I also wrote before I departed about a number of issues that we as the parishes of Dungog & Gresford need to make decisions about. Such decisions will require a Parish Assembly, and my hope is that those assemblies will take place either in late October or early November. Watch his space in coming weeks for more on this development.

My Annual Leave was exceptionally restful and thus most enjoyable. The gathering of the family for my father's 80th birthday was a highlight, and I think that Casino will recover from the large influx of people. It was also good to meet a niece and grand-niece that I hadn't as yet had the pleasure to encounter.

The reading I managed to complete while I was away was exceptionally thought-provoking and may bring about some changes in approach as it settles into my brain. Nothing overly dramatic for

you to worry about; more along the lines of what I might need to do as a priest, a parish priest, and as someone involved in ongoing liturgical formation.

And so my thanks to you all for the opportunity to embrace the opportunity for refreshment. I acknowledge that being left without the celebration of Mass for four weeks is a huge thing to ask of you, and so I am most grateful that you were able to continue gathering to keep holy the Day of the Lord.

I've already looking for a 'supply' priest for next year's leave (in either August or September) and hope that I might be able to cover at least some of the four weeks I would be away. We shall see what eventuates.

And with that, it's back to the 'usual' run of things. Have a blessed week...

Fr Andrew

Perpetual Day of Remembrance

September 15, promulgated as a 'Perpetual Day of Remembrance' in our diocese, marks a day of solemn remembrance of the harm caused by a history of child sexual abuse and failure to protect children. The day has two aspects: one focused on supporting survivors and the other on the prayer of the whole church. This year Perpetual Day of Remembrance Sunday falls on Sunday 15 September.

As a people of faith, we can pray for a change of heart as the ground of hope for a safer future for all. Special prayer resources are available online at bit.ly/3Me5KUj. Every person is invited to use and help disseminate as widely as possible the resource for Individuals and households.

Season of Creation—Creation Sings

All in the Newcastle, Hunter and Manning community are invited to gather to sing in praise and wonder of creation as part of marking the Season of Creation. In the spirit of community choirs, we will gather on Saturday 21 September in Sacred Heart Cathedral, between 2pm and 4pm, to learn a song, pray together and then share afternoon tea.

You are also invited to bring a cutting of a favourite plant to exchange during the time of prayer. If you would like to come along, please register by going to bit.ly/3M16gVw.

Those who love taking photos of nature can join the Season of Creation Photography initiative by submitting images to be displayed during Creation Sings. Please submit your image or images to rose.mcallister@mn.catholic.org.au by 16 September.

Change to Diocesan Library Hours

The Diocesan Library is open for patrons at 12 Tudor St, Newcastle West on Mondays and Fridays (10am-5pm) and on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month (10am-2pm).

More information about the Diocesan Library—including access to the online catalogue—visit the Library's [website](#).

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.

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

Free To A Good Home

Located in our Parish Hall are two items that are no longer needed: a piano (in need of tuning), and an organ and stool. They are 'free to a good home'; they just need to be collected and removed. If these items are something you might be interested in acquiring, then please contact Fr Andrew or the Parish Office.

The Catholic Parishes of Dungog & Gresford acknowledge the Worimi and Wonnarua peoples on whose traditional lands we live and work, and their continuing deep and abiding attachment to the land.

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 Michael Tate

Many great religious leaders have thought that some foods or some people are such a threat to the holiness of their followers that contact with 'unclean', 'defiling' foods or people must be avoided.

So, in Judaism some foods are not kosher: pork being the best known example. In Hinduism people of a lower caste are not even to be lightly brushed against. At the bottom of the caste system one has the literally 'Untouchables'.

So, in Jesus' time Jews would wash their arms to the elbow on returning from out of doors in case they had made contact with something which rendered them 'unclean', 'defiled', unworthy to participate in worship.

Our Lord was totally opposed to the idea that holiness was something secured or gained by being quarantined or separated from any-thing or any-person.

On the contrary, he could touch a leper or have a meal with a prostitute. Rather than defilement flowing from the leper or prostitute to Jesus, his life flowed into them repairing their broken humanity, healing them bodymindspirit, holistically, making them *holy*.

The fact is that God, embodied in Jesus Christ, is contagious. The contagion of Divine Life is meant to flow into the inner depths of personality, into the heart. When this occurs, the Divine Life in the human person causes 'holiness'.

We have to strive to put ourselves in the way of this contagion. We become holy when we allow ourselves to be touched by our Lord Jesus Christ. How do we do this?

By hearing of His life in the Gospel, by being nourished by His life in Holy Communion, by being touched by the plight of those in whom He is to be found. St James in the Second Reading describes some who are particularly vulnerable in a patriarchal society with no social security system: the widows and orphans. No doubt we can identify those equivalent groups in our own society and overseas.

'Good works' do not and cannot make us holy. Our Lord wants us to become aware of the wellspring of our personality, the depths of our hearts. It is the contagion of God infusing our hearts which makes us holy, a symptom of which is 'good works'.

So our Lord invites us to look inwards. When we do, we can make an amazing discovery. The great Spanish mystic, St John of the Cross, wrote in these terms about a person searching for God:

'Oh, then, soul, most beautiful amongst all creatures, so anxious to know the dwelling place of your Beloved so that you may go in search of him and be united with him, now we are telling you that you yourself are his dwelling and his secret inner room and dwelling place.' [*The Spiritual Canticle*, Stanza 1:7-8, written in prison in 1577]

Of course, whilst this is true, (otherwise we would dissolve into non-existence) we will want to respond more wholeheartedly to our consciousness of the presence of God within. We will want our heart to beat to the rhythm of the Sacred Heart of all creation.

When we do so, we will be responding to the ancient command: 'Be holy as I am Holy.' As St John of the Cross might have put it, we are holy from the inside out. We will discover with St Irenaeus that: 'The Glory of God is a human being fully alive.'

Be alive with God! Be holy as the Lord your God is Holy!

© Fr Michael Tate; mtate@bigpond.com

Rev Prof Michael Tate graduated in Law from the University of Tasmania in 1968, and in Theology from Oxford University in 1971. He lectured at the University of Tasmania from 1972-78, being Dean of the Faculty of Law in 1977-78. He was a Senator for Tasmania from 1978-93, being Federal Minister for Justice from 1987-93. He served as Ambassador to The Hague and the Holy See from 1993-96. He then returned to Australia and was ordained in May 2000 and has been a parish priest in the Archdiocese of Hobart since then. He is an Honorary Professor of Law at the University of Tasmania where he lectures in International Humanitarian Law.

Christian Initiation Formation Day

'*Tilling the Soil of Christian Initiation*' is a Formation Day for all parishioners, particularly those who are involved in the Ministry of Christian Initiation with Adults, Children of a Catechetical Age, and Children and their Families via the Sacraments of Initiation.



You are invited to gather with friends and colleagues from other parishes in the Toohey Room on the Cathedral Campus on Saturday 14 September from 9.30am to 3.30pm.

This is an opportunity to immerse ourselves in the foundations of this important ministry, to share our wisdom and questions and to get to know other ministers. Morning tea and lunch provided.

Details and registration via the QR Code.

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

Today's Liturgy:

Scripture Readings: **1st** Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-8; **2nd** James 1:17-18, 21-22, 27;
Gospel Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23.

Responsorial Psalm: The just will live in the presence of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! The Father gave us birth by his message of truth, that we might be as the first fruits of his creation. Alleluia!

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

The Parish Diary (for the week ahead...)

22nd Week in Ordinary Time

Monday 2 September

Tuesday 3 September

Memorial of St Gregory the Great

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Wednesday 4 September

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Thursday 5 September

NO MASS Fr Andrew attending mandatory
Safeguarding training in Maitland

Friday 6 September

11am Anointing Mass @ Lara Aged Care

Saturday 7 September

Sunday 8 September

23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

11.30am Mass @ **East Gresford**

Morning Tea at Clarence Town

The next morning tea at Clarence Town will be held after the 8am Mass TODAY (1 September). Please stay and join us for good food, good company, and good conversation.

Baptisms Next Week

We welcome **Eleanor Lee**, together with her family and friends, as we celebrate her Baptism during the 9.30am Mass next Sunday at St Mary's, Dungog.

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.

In Your Charity, Please Pray for:

Those Who Have Died:

Those Whose Anniversary of Death Is In September: Annie & Brian Maurer, Peggy Brennan, Godfey Barry, Tony O'Hearn, Fr Brian Quillinan, Pat Byron, Marjory Neilson, Ivy Hinton, Arthur Sontar, Ron Neilson, Fr Peter Quirk, Tony & Mary Maurer, Kath Morrow, Frances Amy Young, Rowland Young, Dennis Melmouth, Dot Shurrey, Mary Moylan, Norm Barham, Eileen Godwin, Warren Trappel, Lachlan Tindall, Brian Byron, Margaret Moule, John Melmeth, Beryl Cooper, Paul Evans, Peter Byron, Heather Dawn Atkins, Sr Pat McGinty RSM.

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, Ottilie Sheens, Neville Barry, Susan Barlow, Phillip French, Allwyn Gippel, Margaret Banister, Christine Elliott. Faith Banister.

2024-2025 Social Justice Statement

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference has now released its 2024-2025 Social Justice Statement. The Statement, entitled *Truth & Peace: A Gospel Word in a Violent World*, looks at "the signs of the times in the light of Gospel, sees the violence and asks why the world is as it is and what is needed for there to be peace."

A copy of the Statement can be downloaded from the 'Resources' tab of our website, and I commend it to your prayerful reading and conversation.

Fr Andrew

Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for September:

"Let us pray that each of us listen with our hearts to the cry of the Earth and of the victims of environmental disasters and the climate crisis, making a personal commitment to care for the world we inhabit."