



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.

25TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR B

22 SEPTEMBER 2024

Parish Staff

Fr Andrew Doohan (*Parish Priest*)
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Presbytery & Parish Office

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Parish School

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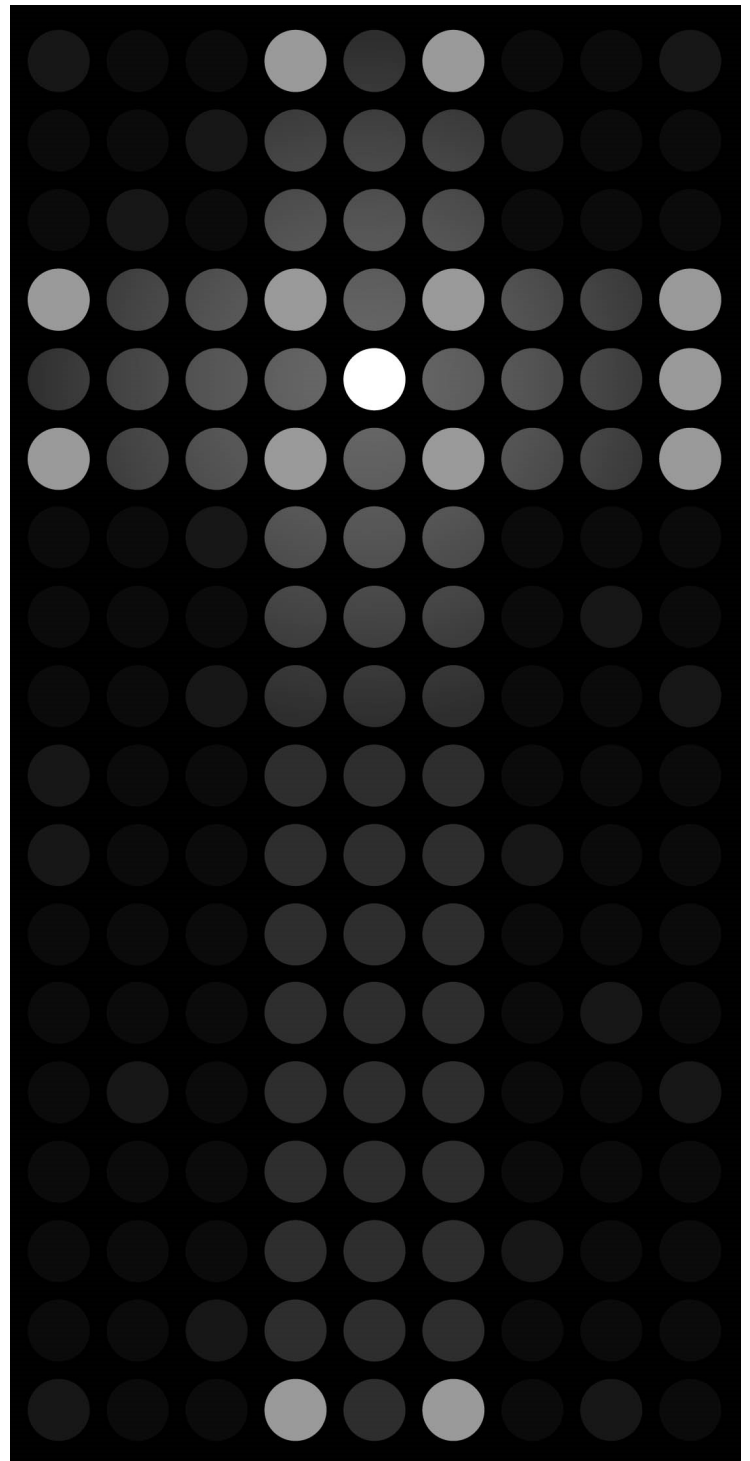
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Parish Bulletin is published each Sunday. Items for inclusion should be received at the Parish Office by 5pm on Wednesdays. Copies of the Bulletin are available from the Parish website which is updated weekly.

Parish Website is updated regularly with copies of the bulletin and other information, and is found at www.dungoggresfordcatholic.org.au.

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



A Pastoral Note...

In the bulletin of 7 July I raised for discussion the possibility of merging the currently separate parishes of Dungog and Gresford into a new combined parish, predominantly to bring together the various administrative requirements currently required to be undertaken twice.

If that merger were to proceed—and I stress 'if' as we have not yet met to discuss and decide—there would also need to be a decision made about the patron for the new parish entity.

Currently, the two parishes of **St Mary's**, Dungog and **St Helen's** Gresford have those Saints as the parish patrons, but each also has another church patron (St Patrick's, and Sacred Heart) within it.

While a decision about a new name of a parish might be as simple as the 'Catholic Parish of Dungog & Gresford', a decision about a new saintly patron is a more problematic issue, if for no other reason than we should perhaps avoid adopting any of the titles our two parishes currently use.

And so along with giving some thought to the possibility of merging our two parishes, so that we can discuss and make decisions about that later in the year, it would also be good to give some thought to which saintly patron we might wish to adopt.

It cannot be St Mary (under any title), St Helen, St Patrick or Sacred Heart (which might also rule out any of the titles traditionally associated with Jesus). But that leaves a huge range of possibilities for us to consider, discuss, and suggest to Bishop Michael as a new patron for a new combined parish entity.

So give it some thought, talk amongst yourselves, and let's see if we can come up with something suitable...and as unique as we are!

Have a blessed week...

Fr Andrew

Upcoming CTC Events

The Catholic Theological College (Melbourne) is a teaching institution of the University of Divinity.

Upcoming events at CTC include:

- Information Session for Educators
- Information Session for Prospective Students
- Engaging Your Faith Online sessions

For more information visit ctc.edu.au/news-and-events or ctc.edu.au/contact/contact-the-registrar.



CATHOLIC
THEOLOGICAL
COLLEGE



UNIVERSITY
OF DIVINITY

Combined Churches Service—Dungog

For reasons surpassing understanding, a decision was made to shift the next Combined Churches Service from St Mary's, Dungog to the Dungog Uniting Church.

The Service will still take place on **Sunday 29 September** starting at **6.30pm**, and will be followed by a 'bring and share' supper in the Uniting Church Hall.

You are invited to join in prayer and worship and in Christian fellowship over supper.

National Police Remembrance Service

This year Bishop Michael Kennedy is hosting the National Police Remembrance Service in Sacred Heart Cathedral on **Friday 27 September**.

Gathered police will march to the Cathedral beginning at 9.30am, with the Service beginning at 10am.

Members of the diocesan community are welcomed and encouraged to gather for this Service as an expression of our support and prayer for the members of the NSW Police Force, and particularly those who have died in the last twelve months.

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 need: 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.

Ordination of Deacon Solomon Okovido

Bishop Michael has announced that he will ordain Deacon Solomon Okovido as a Priest on **Saturday 23 November 2024** in Sacred Heart Cathedral, Hamilton.

The Mass of Ordination will commence at **10am** and the diocesan community is warmly invited to attend to celebrate this important event in the life of the Church of Maitland-Newcastle.

Homily by Fr Michael Tate

As you know, when a Pope is elected, clean straw is burned in a little stove in a corner of the Sistine chapel and white smoke emerges from the chimney. A little while later the Pope appears on the balcony and tells us what name he will adopt.

A few days later, there is a major liturgy when the Pope is installed as Bishop of Rome. For centuries, at that ceremony a triple crown was placed on the Pope's head to signify his dominion and sovereignty over all spheres of creation.

Pope Paul VI did away with that crowning ceremony and said that the title by which he especially wanted to be known was 'Servant of the Servants of God'. He had listened to today's gospel: 'If anyone wants to be first, he must make himself last and servant of all.' The Pope allowed the way he exercised power to be transformed.

Jesus was well aware of the constant temptation for the leaders amongst his followers to allow themselves to be conditioned by the surrounding social and political structures.

He encountered it in today's gospel. He became aware that his disciples were disputing 'who is the greatest', so he decided to teach them a lesson by engaging in some counter-cultural, shocking street theatre: acting out the message he wanted to get across.

He took a child, not because he had some misty sentimental idea that all kids are little innocents but because, in his society, children were absolutely at the bottom of the social scale. They were non-entities until adulthood, totally under the control of the father of the household. They had no social value.

Jesus saw a young boy hovering on the edge of the crowd and beckoned him into the middle of his group of disciples.

In other words, Jesus took an utter nobody, a non-entity, and moved him from the margins of society to the centre, challenging his disciples to change their perspective.

This turns the whole social structure upside down. It subverts the whole idea of who is important and who is not. It revolutionises the notions of superiority and inferiority.

Our Lord is saying, 'Take the most vulnerable person in your society, make that person the centre of your attention, and change. Be prepared for some pain and turmoil in changing your perspective.'

How might this apply to us?

The aboriginal activist Michael Mansell gets under my skin. Every time he protests about this or that

aboriginal cause, my hackles rise. Initially. But, consider the situation in the light of today's gospel.

The early European settlers did to the aboriginal people the exact opposite of what Our Lord acted out in today's gospel. They took a vulnerable people whose lives centred on a particular environment and, quite literally, dislocated them, pushed them to the margins of society, geographically and metaphorically.

There is another group which we have quite literally put beyond the margins. Asylum seekers, making their way by sea, have been sent to Papua New Guinea and Nauru. These are marginalised people whom Our Lord would bring to the front and centre of our attention so that our perspective is changed. Radically.

We are a Christian community. We have to take the gospel stories as the foundation and impetus for our lives. With the aboriginal people and their descendants we have to see them as the most marginalised inhabitants of our nation, people whom Our Lord would have brought to the centre of attention of his followers.

We may not agree on a single political response. But we must start with Jesus and his dramatic street theatre. If we do so we may find to our surprise that what Jesus said to his followers comes true for us. 'Anyone who welcomes one of these little ones in my name, welcomes me.'

© 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.

Tribunal of the Catholic Church

Marriage breakdown is a traumatic experience for all those concerned. The Church reaches out in support of those who are divorced, while also upholding the permanence of a true Christian marriage.

The Maitland-Newcastle Office of the Tribunal extends an invitation to any divorced person who would like to talk about the annulment process. You can be assured that your privacy will be respected. Should you choose to seek an annulment, you will be guided and supported through the process.

For further information, please phone the Maitland-Newcastle Office of the Tribunal on 49791370 or email tribunal@mn.catholic.org.au.

Today's Liturgy:

Scripture Readings: 1st Wisdom 2:12, 17-20; 2nd James 3:16—4:3; **Gospel** Mark 9:30-37

Responsorial Psalm: The Lord upholds my life.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! God has called us with the gospel to share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Alleluia!

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

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

25th Week in Ordinary Time

Monday 23 September

Memorial of St Pius of Pietreclina

Tuesday 24 September

NO MASS Fr Andrew attending Parish Viability meeting in Muswellbrook

Wednesday 25 September

8.30am Mass @ Dungog.

Thursday 26 September

9.30am Mass @ East Gresford

Friday 27 September

Memorial of St Vincent de Paul

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

Saturday 28 September

5.30pm Mass @ East Gresford

Sunday 29 September

26th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

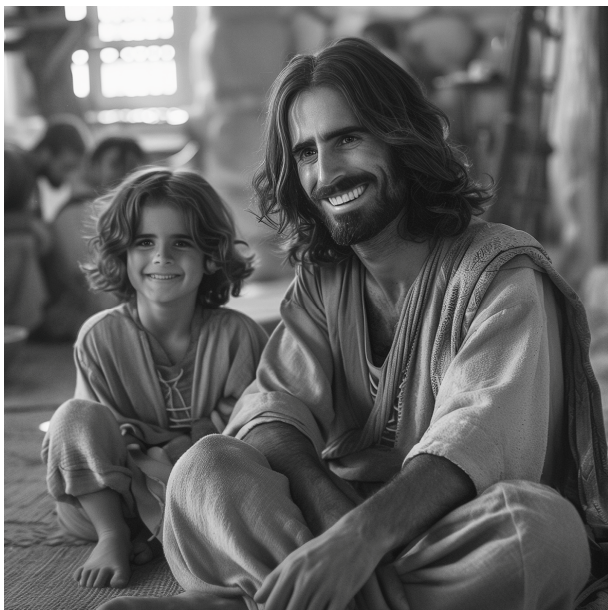
9.30am Mass @ Dungog

In Your Charity, Please Pray for:

Those Who Have Died: Pam O'Malley Jones.

Those Whose Anniversary of Death Is In September: Annie & Brian Maurer, Peggy Brennan, Godfrey Barry, Tony O'Hearn, Fr Brian Quillinan, Pat Byron, Marjory Neilson, Ivy Hinton, Arthur Sonter, 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, Joanne Hancock.



Baptisms This Week

We welcome **Peter Soars**, together with his family and friends, as we celebrate his Baptism at 11am TODAY at St Patrick's, Clarence Town (not Dungog as mentioned last week).

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."

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.