



# 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.

## 26TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR B

### 29 SEPTEMBER 2024

#### Parish Staff

Fr Andrew Doohan (*Parish Priest*)  
Kerry Copus (*Parish Secretary*)

#### Presbytery & Parish Office

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#### Office Hours

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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...

Folks may remember that last week I attended a meeting in Muswellbrook for the purpose of discussing "parish viability". It was the next instalment in a series of meetings that have been discussing this general theme, and attempting to find some a solution to some of the pressing issues that have been identified along the way.

The meeting last week raised a number of matters which, if they are adopted and implemented, might have an impact on our own conversations to take place at the proposed parishes assembly and thereafter.

Two in particular are worthy of mention.

First, there is a proposed change to the way in the administration of the remuneration of the clergy of the diocese. There will be no change to our overall remuneration (which I've written about previously) but rather the administration thereof.

At the moment, two collections are taken up, the first being for the support of the clergy of the diocese as a whole. This collection is taken up in each parish, recorded, balanced and then remitted to the central MCCF office on a quarterly basis, where it is once again checked, balance and recorded.

It is proposed that in place of this system that each parish would be levied a percentage of its overall income so that when combined across the diocese, there would be a sufficient amount collected to ensure the remuneration of the

#### Daylight Saving Time Starts Next Weekend

A reminder that we need to change our clocks forward one hour in the wee small hours of next Sunday. Don't forget to chance your clocks (at least those ones that don't change themselves) before heading to bed next Saturday night!

clergy.

The proposed system would ease the burden of administration that is currently borne by each parish, and allow for a more equitable sharing of costs, i.e., those parishes with a larger overall income would support those with a smaller income while maintaining the current state of clergy remuneration.

A similar system is being proposed for permit parishes to access the various shared services activities offered by the diocesan offices. Such a levy would provide guaranteed access to such services as legal, IT, finance, property and HR services.

On the other side of the ledger (so to speak) the adoption of these initiatives would see the withdrawal of the current Diocesan Contribution currently imposed on parishes.

It is this Diocesan Contribution which underwrites the current tax deductibility offered against any money provided to the second collection. This is a matter we have already slated for conversation at our parishes assembly and this latest proposal may impact on the outcome of our conversations accordingly.

I shall keep you in the loop on developments in this area in the lead up to the assembly so we can make an informed decision.

Have a blessed week...

*Fr Andrew*

### **New Rosters For Mass at Dungog**

A new liturgical ministries roster for the 9.30am Mass at Dungog will begin on the first Sunday of October. Copies are available on the back table and a copy is also on the noticeboard.

The roster will be renewed again in February 2025 (to start in March) so please contact Fr Andrew if you would like to be added or removed from the next Roster.

We are particularly in search of parishioners who would be able to assist with the counting of collections as part of the Roster—again, please speak with Fr Andrew if you feel you can assist.

### **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.

### **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 TONIGHT **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.

### **New Assistant Principal Appointed**

Parishioners would be aware that the Assistant Principal of St Joseph's School, Dungog has been appointed as Principal of Our Lady of Victories School, Shortland from the beginning of the 2025 school year.

Following a selection process that was concluded a few weeks ago, and following the completion of the relevant processes, Nicholas Hughes has been appointed as the new Assistant Principal of St Joseph's. Nicholas will take up the appointment for the beginning of the 2025 school year.

Nicholas is currently on the staff of St Aloysius' School, Chisholm, where in addition to being a classroom teacher, Nicholas is the Religious Education Coordinator and has also been the Acting Assistant Principal.

Nicholas and his family are parishioners of Raymond Terrace. We look forward to having him join our school staff next year.

### **Celebration of Confirmation**

The celebration of Confirmation for those children currently completing their journey to full Christian Initiation will take place on **Friday 25 October** at 6.30pm, with Bishop Michael presiding.

As Confirmation needs to be celebrated before the celebration of First Communion, those children who are not yet part of the process will now need to wait until the 2025 cohort, the details of which will be made available early in the new year.

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

In cathedrals and many prominent churches, there is a rather large sacristy – the place where the priest prepares for Mass. It was also the place of much heartache and insult. In the 'old days' a Catholic marrying a non-Catholic Christian could not do so before the altar in the main body of the church. The ceremony was held in the sacristy.

Nowadays, most marriages I conduct are between Catholics and non-Catholic Christians, and they are grace-filled events for the couple, for the families and friends witnessing the marriage, and for the Church which is thereby truer to today's Gospel.

Not to set boundaries which deny the operation of God's grace outside the Church.

Again, when a person, already baptised as a Methodist or Anglican, for example, approaches me with the desire to become a Catholic, they are often very surprised that they are not to be baptised into the Church. Baptism is never repeated. The person has already been immersed in or doused with water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Yes, this gospel has much to reveal to us which should guide our ecumenical endeavours.

But, there is something more large-scale, of even greater historical import happening with the understanding of the Catholic Church about the movement of the Holy Spirit amongst the adherents and followers of other great world religious communities.

Of course, we have to be very clear as to our identity centred around certain core truths revealed for us, and focus on Jesus of Nazareth as the body language of God.

There is a huge gulf between Muslims and us about Jesus Christ. Muslims do not even believe that he was killed on the Cross, let alone raised to life after such an ignominious death. We Christians hold to the testimony and faith of the Apostles.

But, we Catholic Christians also believe that the Divine Wind, the Holy Gust, the Holy Spirit, blows where it pleases amongst all peoples of all religious traditions (and of none).

In the early centuries of the Church in the pagan world this was expressed by saying that 'the seeds of the Word' were sown by the Holy Spirit in the hearts of human beings. The fruit was often to be seen in their beliefs and customs, even if they were stunted, or suffered from a lack of light.

What does this mean for our relationships with the Muslims? Do we solely focus on the gulf between us? Or do we give room to recognise the Seed of the Word – our shared belief in the One God,

Creator of the Cosmos, Lord of History, Merciful and Just?

The task of the Church is to nurture that seed, bring it close to the illumination of Divine Light so as to reveal the true identity of Jesus Christ, God embodied for us.

It is not too much to say that the world is holding its breath over the encounter of the Catholic Church and Islam in our time. There will be blunders and even animosity in both camps. There is a terrible history on both sides, and contemporary barbarities which are grossly inhumane and blasphemous.

But, we have a confident hope based on our faith that, whilst the world is holding its breath, God is breathing the Divine Breath amongst Christians and Muslims.

In the world, at least in the West, marked by indifference and hostility towards belief in God – in fact on an epidemic scale – the Muslims are with us, not against us. Let us recognise 'the Seeds of the Word' amongst them.

May they respond to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in a way which allows them to perceive deeper truths about the identity and mission of Jesus of Nazareth, enhancing their belief in One God, Creator of the Universe, Lord of History, Merciful and Just.

© 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** Numbers 11:25-29; **2nd** James 5:1-6; **Gospel** Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48.

**Responsorial Psalm:** The precepts of the Lord give joy to the heart.

**Gospel Acclamation:** Alleluia, alleluia! Anyone who is not against us is for us.  
If your hand should cause you to sin, cut it off. Alleluia!

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

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

26th Week in Ordinary Time

Monday 30 September

Memorial of St Jerome

Tuesday 1 October

Memorial of St Therese of the Child Jesus

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Wednesday 2 October

Memorial of the Holy Guardian Angels

8.30am Mass @ Dungog.

Thursday 3 October

9.30am Mass @ East Gresford

Friday 4 October

Memorial of St Francis of Assisi

11am Anointing Mass @ Lara Aged Care

Saturday 5 October

5.30pm Mass @ East Gresford

Sunday 6 October

27th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

## In Your Charity, Please Pray for:

### Those Who Have Died:

**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.

## DATE CLAIMER—Parishes Assembly

As previously mentioned—prior to my Annual Leave—a Parishes Assembly will take place this year to discuss and make decisions about a number of issues.

This Assembly is tentatively set down to take on **Saturday 30 November**. More details will follow, but claim the date now and add it to your diary.

## Morning Tea at Clarence Town

The next morning tea at Clarence Town will be held after the 8am Mass next Sunday (6 October). Please bring a plate to share, and stay to join us for good food, good company, and good conversation.

## 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, commencing at **10am**.

## 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.