



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.

31ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR B

3 NOVEMBER 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.

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

A Pastoral Note...

Another month has ended and another month has begun. It is part of the never-ending surge of time that marks our lives as humans and, for those of faith, Christians.

Another part of the never-ending surge of human existence is the reality of death. It is not something that we can avoid, nor, I hasten to add, is it something that we should actively seek. It is quite simply part of living that death will eventually become of our experience.

During the month of November, the Church invites us to remember those members of our family, and our friends and acquaintances, who have died and whom we hope and pray are now abiding in the presence of God.

The month of November can therefore be a time of difficulty particularly when remembering those we have loved and whose life and death has left its mark on us and human beings. We cannot avoid grief, if only because it is the natural result of having loved in the first place.

As Christians, we have a duty to remember those who have died, particularly those whom we have known and loved. We also have a profound duty to remember those who have died who we do not know, who are unmourned by others, and who may have been unloved in this life.

Our prayer for these of our fellow brothers and sisters, as it is for those who we have known and loved, is that they now rest in the abiding presence of God.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace.

Have a blessed week...

Fr Andrew

The Return of the Chalice—A Possibility

Bishop Michael has determined that the time is now appropriate for the current blanket restriction on the possibility of receiving Communion from the Chalice to be lifted. The current restriction will cease to be in place from the First Sunday of Advent (Sunday, 1 December 2024).

The Bishop has asked each parish to undertake a process of discernment about when and if to return to offering Communion from the Chalice in their particular circumstances.

A copy of the Bishop's letter is available on the noticeboard of our churches this weekend, while the Pastoral Guidelines it recommends can be found on the website under 'Resources'.

I would ask all parishioners to give this matter some serious thought and prayer, and, if time permits, it can be discussed at the Parishes Assembly—or at a separate meeting if time does not.

Fr Andrew

DATE CLAIMER—Dungog Christmas Lunch

The Dungog Parish Christmas Lunch will take place on **Sunday 1 December** in the Parish Hall. More details will follow, but claim the date now and add it to your diary so you don't miss out!



Ordination of Deacon Solomon Okovido

Deacon Solomon Okovido will be ordained as a Priest on **Saturday 23 November 2024** in Sacred Heart Cathedral, Hamilton, commencing at **10am**. All parishioners of the diocesan community are invited to come together to celebrate this important occasion.

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.

Parishes Assembly

The Parishes Assembly will take place on **Saturday 30 November**, in St Mary's Parish Hall, Dungog commencing at 9.30am and will conclude no later than 12 midday.

The 'Meeting Papers' are now available for downloading from the 'Resources' page of our website. If you are unable to download the document and would like a copy, please contact the Parish Office and we will print a copy for you.

I commend this process to your prayerful consideration. Please come along to the Assembly and help determine the future of our two parishes.

Fr Andrew

Catholic Mission Appeal

On behalf of the Church in Mongolia, and people like Chuluunbaatar, Catholic Mission would like to again thank you for your generosity.

Your gift is already working towards programs like the House of Mercy, which will support people that have been affected by a range of issues, such as homelessness and domestic violence.



To learn more about the impact of Catholic Mission's supported by your generosity, please visit catholicmission.org.au/our-work. Here you can also sign up to their regular newsletter to keep up to date with the latest news.

If you have not yet had the opportunity to make a contribution, please do so by going to catholicmission.org.au/mongolia. Your action will make a positive impact for many around the world.

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.

Homily by Richard Leonard

It is amazing to note how leaving out just one half of one verse of the Gospel can affect the Christian life for centuries.

All of us know by rote the command of Jesus that we must love God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength and we must love our neighbour.

But the second half of verse 31 is not usually quoted because, sadly, it is not as imbedded in our memory. It reads: 'You shall love your neighbour AS YOU LOVE YOURSELF.'

There are very clear historical reasons why the second part of Jesus' summary of the commandments was quietly forgotten. Given the chequered personal experience he had of his own body, St Augustine, in the fifth century, had very ambivalent feelings about the human body. He thought that, generally, it was to be feared as the instrument through which we would sin. He encouraged us to tame it through prayer, mortification and penance. Augustine's ideas about the body held sway until Thomas Aquinas in the 13th century and the Jesuit Theologians of the 15th century argued that while the body can lead us to sin, it is also a temple of the Holy Spirit and a vehicle of God's love and grace.

In the 16th century Cornelius Jansen denounced Aquinas and the Jesuits and argued that Augustine held the correct Christian view. No matter what the Church did to denounce Jansen at the time, his thinking took deep root in Europe, the USA and missionary countries throughout the world. Jansenism, the belief that our body and its desires are evil and that we need to harshly mortify ourselves, is, tragically, still active in Christian thought today.

Jansenism is irreconcilable with today's Gospel where Jesus tells us that the love of God, the love of neighbour and the love of self are the cornerstones of the Christian law. And the opposite must be true too. We CANNOT call ourselves Christian if we hate God, hate our neighbour or hate ourselves.

Some people argue that Western society has already gone too far in the direction of self-love. They maintain that the lengths some people go to achieve a sculptured body, the use of steroids, the growing frequency of eating disorders, the adoration of sportsmen and women, the cult of the gym and of the sex industry all point to a culture too much in love with itself. Some argue what we need is a good dose of self-control. They are only half-right.

The problem with the term 'love of self' is that we often hear in it an encouragement to 'adore self'. Nothing could be further from what Jesus is

saying. We are called to love our body, not worship it. Jesus is not calling us to a narcissistic love, like we see in the sex industry and the gym cults, where the only thing we love is ourself. If we have no sense of our own self worth, our own dignity and the personal love of God for each of us, it is impossible for us to give the same to others and to claim from others the dignity we deserve. We will either treat others as our inferiors on the one hand, or allow others to walk all over us, on the other.

Love of self is not about canonising a loss of self-control. Jesus shows us by the way he loved his Father, us and himself that true love always involves sacrifice. If we love our self in the right way, we have the self control to forgo those things that are most destructive in our life and we have the generosity to do for others the things that will enrich their lives. Jesus knew, that we can never love others if we hate ourselves.

Let's pray in this Eucharist, then, that we will develop our mind, heart, soul and strength to love the One who has created us in love and love those given into our care with the same love we lavish on ourselves. The Gospel of Jesus Christ demands nothing less!

© 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!!

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Today's Liturgy:

Scripture Readings: 1st Deuteronomy 6:2-6; 2nd Hebrews 7:23-28; **Gospel** Mark 12:28-34.

Responsorial Psalm: I love you, Lord, my strength.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! All who love me will keep my words, and my Father will love them and we will come to them. 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...)

31st Week in Ordinary Time

Monday 4 November

Memorial of St Charles Borromeo

Tuesday 5 November

NO MASS Fr Andrew facilitating liturgical formation.

Wednesday 6 November

NO MASS Fr Andrew in Newcastle for Clergy Fund meetings.

Thursday 7 November

9.30am Mass @ East Gresford

Friday 8 November

9.30am Mass @ Dungog (with Kinder, Years 1 & 2 from St Joseph's School)

Saturday 9 November

Feast of the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica

Sunday 10 November

32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

11.30am Mass @ Summer Hill

In Your Charity, Please Pray for:

Those Who Have Died: Garry Browning, Maree McCulloch.

Those Whose Anniversary of Death Is In November: Irma Iacono, Jean Harrison, Francis Kealy, Terry Amos, Raymond Dillon, Lee Murphy, Jenny Taylor, Norma Kingston.

Those Who Are Sick: Maryann Smith, Daphne Bond, 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, Neville Barry, Susan Barlow, Phillip French, Allwyn Gippel, Margaret Banister, Christine Elliott, Jean Robertson.

Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for November:

Together with Pope Francis, this month we pray:

"Let us pray that all parents who mourn the loss of a son or daughter find support in their community, and may receive peace of heart from the Spirit of Consolation."

Morning Tea at Clarence Town

The next morning tea at Clarence Town will be held after the 8am Mass TODAY (3 November) under the pergola beside the church.

Please stay and join us for good food, good company, and good conversation.

Safeguarding in our Parishes means ...

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle has an abiding commitment to promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

If you have any concerns for a child or vulnerable adult please contact the Office of Safeguarding: by phoning 4979 1390 or by emailing childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au. Visit the Office of Safeguarding website for further information www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au.

