



# 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.

## 4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR C

### 22 DECEMBER 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:admin@dungog.catholic.edu.au)

W: [www.dungog.catholic.edu.au](http://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](http://www.dungoggresfordcatholic.org.au).

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



### Finding A New Patronal Name

The search for a new patron for a new parish has begun!

If you would like to suggest the name of a saint to potentially become the patron of the 'Catholic Parish of Dungog Gresford', please do so in writing. It would be helpful to provide a little bit of information about your proposed saint and tell us why you think your saint is a good choice.

A list of the current patronal names used across the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle, which you may like to avoid, can be found on our website under the 'Resources' tab of the main menu.

A reminder that the patronal names already in use within the two parishes are not available.

Please lodge your submission to Fr Andrew by the end of February 2025.

### Dungog Christmas Hamper Raffle Results

Congratulations to the lucky winners of this year's Christmas Hamper Raffle:

- |                     |                  |
|---------------------|------------------|
| 1) Margaret Gippel  | 6) Brett Farrell |
| 2) Jo Jokinen       | 7) A Ball        |
| 3) Hugo Danvers     | 8) M Primrose    |
| 4) Jacqui Wilkinson | 9) Mitchell Grey |
| 5) Mackenzie        | 10) M Primrose   |

Again, many thanks to who donated the contents of the various prize hampers and to those who bought tickets. As a result of your generosity \$570 was raised to continue the support of the parish.

# Rejoice!!

### Christmas Masses

With Christmas Day falling on a Wednesday in 2024, our parishes will celebrate the Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord (to give the day its official liturgical title) as follows:

*Christmas Eve, Tuesday 24 December*  
6pm Mass @ Dungog

*Christmas Day, Wednesday 25 December*  
8am Mass @ Clarence Town  
10am Mass @ East Gresford

Please pass these times to anyone who might like to know about them.

Please note that there will be no weekday Masses on Thursday 26 December and Friday 27 December.

### Columban Calendars Available

Columban Calendars for 2025 will be available from Sunday 17 November at the cost of \$10 each. Please see Lyn Barham if you're interested.

### Parish Office Closure

With the pending Christmas-New Year period rapidly approaching, please be aware that the Parish Office will close on Christmas Eve and re-open on Tuesday 7 January 2025.

The parish phone and email will be monitored during this period in case of emergency but any item of 'regular' business will need to wait until the office reopens.

### Baptisms Next Week

We welcome **Dusty Dixon, Rollo Booth, and Sobi Booth**, together with their family and friends, as we celebrate their Baptisms after the 9.30am Mass TODAY at St Mary's, Dungog.

### Mass For New Year's Day

Mass to celebrate the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God (and to mark the beginning of 2025) will take place at the slightly later time of **9.30am** on New Year's Day at St Mary's, Dungog.

### Vanuatu Earthquake Appeal

Vanuatu has experienced two earthquakes within 24 hours, impacting over 116,000 people and causing significant extensive damage to buildings and infrastructure. The main hospital in Port Vila has sustained extensive damage and is overwhelmed by the mass casualties.

There are hundreds of people who have been injured or trapped under rubble, and at least 14 people killed, with the death toll expected to continue to rise. People remain fearful of further disaster, as Vanuatu is one of the countries who are most susceptible to natural disasters such as earthquakes, storm damage, flooding and tsunamis.

This appeal will provide support to the on the ground partners of Caritas Australia who are ready to respond to the humanitarian requirements by providing emergency shelter, food and other essentials, psychological support, and recover efforts.

To donate visit [www.caritas.org.au/vanuatu](http://www.caritas.org.au/vanuatu) or use the QR Code above. Your generosity will be very greatly appreciated.



## Homily by Richard Leonard

The visitation is one of the moving scenes in the Gospel. On a human level, here are two cousins, unexpectedly pregnant in the most extraordinary circumstances, meeting and offering each other greetings and support. We can see the scene and feel the bond.

In the Gospel of Luke this moment is pivotal. These women meet in the mountains where God has always been manifest to the Israelites. Elizabeth is the Old Covenant made to Israel and she carries John who will be the herald of the Messiah. Mary, literally, embodies the new, and final, covenant in Jesus.

Elizabeth recognises what is happening here and she embraces all that God is doing for the world. She has tasted the promise of God and now sees its fulfilment.

On a more mundane level, however, a meeting like this would have occasioned much comment and speculation from those outside the inner circle. We only have to imagine it happening today in any small suburb or country town for us to appreciate the human scale of the unfolding drama.

The Iona Community has explored the unwritten history in their story of Mmes Matthew, Mark and Luke, 'The village gossips'.

Narrator: In any small village, news travels quickly. Therefore it is only to be expected that the strange changes in the lives of Mary and Elizabeth might have been food for other people's thought.

Mrs Matthew: Well, ladies, you know how I'm not one for gossip, but wait until you hear this. You know that old woman Elizabeth, with the man who has not spoken for nine months.

Mrs Mark: Yes, what about them?

Mrs Matthew: They say she's had a little boy.

Mrs Luke: At her age? She's 88 if she's a day!

Mrs Matthew: Well, that's what I heard and it was on very good authority!

Mrs Luke: Are you sure you've got the right woman? You're not mixing her up with her cousin?

Mrs Mark: Who? Mary?

Mrs Luke: That's her! Now, I'm not one for talking about anybody but wait until I tell you this. She's pregnant!

Mrs Mark: Never! How do you know?

Mrs Luke: You can tell. You can just tell.

Mrs Matthew: Oh yes, you can tell all right. I heard her in the store last week asking for a dress eight sizes too big for her.

Mrs Luke: There you are. Draw your own conclusions. Now, I know that this will not go any further, but I hear that she and a certain young man are planning to leave the district.

Mrs Matthew: Who is the young man?

Mrs Luke: The joiner's boy, Joseph.

Mrs Mark: Never!

Mrs Luke: Well, that's what they say and I'm not one for gossip.

Mrs Mark: So, have you heard what they're saying about the so-called census?

Mrs Matthew: No. Tell us.

Mrs Mark: Well, I happened to hear that the reason the Romans want our names is not to send us birthday cards.

Mrs Luke: Well, why are they having a census?

Mrs Mark: To register us for a 'poll tax'.

Mrs Matthew: I heard it was a 'community charge'.

Mrs Mark: 'A rose by any other name.'

Mrs Luke: They wouldn't do that, would they?

Mrs Mark: Well I'm just warning you. Mind, I'm not one for gossip.

Mrs Luke: Nor me.

Mrs Matthew: Nor me.

The story of the visitation keeps the rumour going that just when we think we can figure God out, predict how God will enter our lives and our world, he does something none of us can imagine. And the best thing about this rumour is – it's true.

As we wait for Christmas to come again into our lives, let's make room for Jesus Christ who turns our expectations upside down and always gives the gossips plenty to talk about.

© 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.

*Maranatha!*

## Today's Liturgy:

**Scripture Readings:** 1st Micah 5:1-4; 2nd Hebrews 10:5-10; **Gospel** Luke 1:39-44.

**Responsorial Psalm:** Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.

**Gospel Acclamation:** Alleluia, alleluia! I am the servant of the Lord:  
may his will for me be done. Alleluia!

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

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

4th Week of Advent

Monday 23 December

Tuesday 24 December

Christmas Eve

6pm Christmas Vigil Mass @ Dungog

Wednesday 25 December

The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas Day)

8am Christmas Mass @ Clarence Town

10am Christmas Mass @ East Gresford

Thursday 26 December

Feast of St Stephen

**NO MASS**

Friday 27 December

Feast of St John

**NO MASS**

Saturday 28 December

Feast of the Holy Innocents

5.30pm Mass @ East Gresford

Sunday 29 December

Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, & Joseph

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

## Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for December:

Together with Pope Francis, this month we pray:

*"Let us pray that this Jubilee strengthen us in our faith, helping us to recognise the Risen Christ in the midst of our lives, transforming us into pilgrims of Christian hope."*

The Catholic Parishes of Dungog & Gresford acknowledge the people of the Worimi and Wonnarua, on whose traditional lands we gather, live and work. We acknowledge 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.

## In Your Charity, Please Pray for:

### Those Who Have Died:

**Those Whose Anniversary of Death Is In December:** Katie Rumbel, Elizabeth Holstein, Keith Schumaker, Margaret Egan, Ella Maher, Alan Robertson, Christine Knight, Margaret Miners, Mollie Smith, George Maurer, Mervyn Trappel, Paul Murphy, Rowland Young, Catherine Reid, Brian Smith, Thora Tindall, Valma Osmond, Nancy Dickson, Narelle Ritter, Anne Faber, Christine Brosie, Eileen Lane, Peter McGinty.

**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, Neville Barry, Susan Barlow, Allwyn Gippel, Christine Elliott, Jean Robertson, Jessica Byron, George Bainou.

## 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](mailto:childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au). Visit the Office of Safeguarding website for further information [www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au](http://www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au).

