



# 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.

## THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

### 2 FEBRUARY 2025

#### 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:** 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:** 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...

The possibility of receiving Communion from the Chalice again has existed since 1 December in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. At our Assembly on 30 November, some limited conversation was had about our reintroduction of the Chalice with a general consensus that we not do anything before Christmas.

And here we are at February!

I believe it is time for us to make a decision together about if and when we might resume Communion from the Chalice so that, if the decision is to do so, we can take the concrete steps necessary to do exactly that.

To that end, I would like to have a 'poll' at our Masses on the weekend of **Sunday 16 February** to gauge the views of parishioners. It will be a simple 'show of hands' kind of approach since I think that even if only a number of people wish to receive from the Chalice again we should probably move in that direction *for those who wish it*.

I say that because no one can be forced or required to receive Communion from the Chalice, but similar no one should be denied that option except in the most serious of circumstances (such as a pandemic event!).

So can I once again invite everyone to give this matter some thought over the coming fortnight, pray about it, and then be prepared to make your thoughts known on Sunday 16 February.

If anyone has a particular question or issue they would like clarified or wish to discuss it with me, please let me know—I'm only too happy to do so if it helps people set their minds at ease.

Have a blessed week...

Fr Andrew

### Confirmation in 2025

We receive notification during the week that Bishop Michael will celebrate Confirmation here in Dungog & Gresford on the evening of **Friday, 14 November**.

Further information will be made available in the coming weeks, but if you know any families that might like to know that information now, please pass it along.

Can we invite you to add the date to your diary now, and plan on joining our candidates as they celebrate their continuing journey of initiation into our Church.



# Rejoice!!

### Renewing the Dungog Rosters

It's time for a renewal of our liturgical rosters in Dungog!

If you would like to contribute to our liturgical life in Dungog by being a Sacristan, Greeter, Reader, bringing forward the gifts, or (if it eventuates) assisting with the Chalice, please let Fr Andrew know of your desire by the end of February. If training (initial or refresher) is required, that can be arranged before the new rosters come into effect.

On the other hand, if you are currently on our roster and would like to take a break from your ministry for the next edition (which will be about six months), please let Fr Andrew know so that your wish can be honoured.

A quick email or little note would be most helpful because Fr Andrew can sometimes forget things when people tell him—especially before or after Mass. Thank you :)

### School's Back!!

A big welcome back to the returning students of St Joseph's Primary School who head back into the classrooms this coming week.

And a very big welcome to our Kindergarten students as they begin their adventure at 'big school'.

We hope that 2025 is an exciting year of learning and adventure, and we look forward to seeing you when you join us for Mass.

### Diocesan Launch of the Jubilee Year

On Sunday 2 March, Bishop Michael will officially launch the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle's celebration of the Jubilee Year.

This will be marked by a Diocesan pilgrimage from Nobby's Beach (8am) to Sacred Heart Cathedral, culminating in Mass (10am) and a Festival (11am) in the Cathedral precinct grounds. The Festival will feature an official launch of *Project Compassion 2025* and the distribution of some resources.

All corners of the Diocese are encouraged to have representation and involvement as we mark Pope Francis' theme for the Jubilee—*Pilgrims of Hope*. Please email [mission@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:mission@mn.catholic.org.au) for more information.

From Fr Andrew:

*It would be wonderful if some of our parishioners might be able to be present at this event to 'represent' us, but also to participate themselves. Regrettably, I will be unable to attend because of the need for Masses here in the parish, but it would be good to have some representation.*

*Please let me know if you would like assistance in attending this event, and I will do what I can to ease the process.*

Fr Andrew

### Lenten Program 2025

As previously advised, it's time now to think about whether you would like to be participate in a Lenten Group during 2025 or, alternatively, you would like to undertake the Lenten journey of reflection by yourself.

'Sign up' sheets are now available in our churches on which you can indicate your wishes for either approach so the Parish can ensure it orders enough resources for everyone who wishes to join in. Please indicate your interest no later than **Sunday 9 February**.

An initial order has been made, which should be sufficient, but if we need to order more that would be best done by the middle of February at the latest.

## Homily by Richard Leonard

For most of its history today's feast was a dual observation. The Purification of Mary accompanied the Presentation of the Child Jesus in the Temple.

It's not that long ago that western cultures had ceremonies to 'purify' women after childbirth. These rituals have their roots in some appalling thinking about how the flow of women's blood defiles them and those who touched them. Maybe the only modern reclamation we could make of these rites would be to understand them as purification of the memory. After the selflessness of a pregnancy and the great pain of childbirth, a mother could use such a ritual moment to reclaim her body. In any case, it is right and good that we no longer overly emphasise this side of today's feast.

The Presentation of Jesus is easier to handle and to understand. Jewish law stipulated that within forty days of a child's birth the parents should present their baby in the temple as an act of thanksgiving. In the Bible the number forty always indicates a time of formation. So forty days after Christmas the Church has today's celebration. As Luke describes the scene Simeon and Anna represent the Old Covenant. He embodies all those who longed to see the Christ. She embodies all those who prophesied his coming. In a few sentences Luke tells us that just as the Israelites entered the Promised Land after forty years in the desert, so now the time of waiting, searching and hoping is over. Israel can receive the promised Messiah. The old covenant has been fulfilled and the new covenant is established in Jesus.

The word 'presentation' is used in two revealing ways these days. In psychology they talk about a 'presenting problem'. In medicine people are said to 'present' with certain symptoms. In both cases, the word presentation is used to indicate that something more important lies beneath what is first observed. Further investigation reveals the deeper causes and the best course of action.

So to us. We present ourselves in the temple today and it's important we remember that we do have to put on a show for God. God does not need a performance from us; God invites us to an encounter of love. Seeing that God knows us intimately it's crazy that we should be anything but ourselves before him. But we sometimes go through the pretence of dressing things up, pretending otherwise or putting on a show.

Today's feast reminds us that when we encounter the presence of God a range of responses are on display. Just recall the ones in today's Gospel: expectation, hope, frailty, thanksgiving, foreboding, puzzlement, love and joy.

May Jesus' presentation enable us to let pass in peace any need to act before God, but rather embrace a new way of encountering God's presence, where we own just how we are, and not how we would like to be. When we do this we can enjoy the possibilities of a rich, deep and realistic relationship with God. We also find that it's so much easier to discover, with God, the causes and the actions that will lead us to healing, fulfilment and peace.

© 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.

## Finding A New Patronal Name

**Although we have already received a number of suggestions**, the search for a new patron for a new parish continues.

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.

**Please give this some thought and prayer and make a contribution to the future of our parish.**

## Electronic Banking Details

BSB: 066 739  
A/c Name: Catholic Development Fund  
Reference: Your Surname and/or Envelope No., or other reference.

Account Nos:

First collection: 100 029 440

Second collection:

Dungog: 100 005 170

Gresford 100 005 173

## Today's Liturgy:

**Scripture Readings:** 1st Malachi 3:1-4; 2nd Hebrews 2:14-18; **Gospel** Luke 2:22-40.

**Responsorial Psalm:** Who is this king of glory? It is the Lord!

**Gospel Acclamation:** Alleluia, alleluia! This the light of revelation to the nations, and the glory of your people, Israel. 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...)

4th Week in Ordinary Time, Year I

Monday 3 February

Tuesday 4 February

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Wednesday 5 February

Memorial of St Agatha

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Thursday 6 February

Memorial of St Paul Miki and companions

9.30am Mass @ East Gresford

Friday 7 February

11am Anointing Mass @ Lara Aged Care

Saturday 8 February

Sunday 9 February

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

11.30am Mass @ Summer Hill

## In Your Charity, Please Pray for:

**Those Who Have Died:** Aldo Rufo.

### Those Whose Anniversary of Death Is In February:

Michael Banister, Barney Hartnett, Edie Raymond, Jeffery Bunt, Eileen Maurer, Alban Maurer, Florence Farah, Lorraine Harris, Allan Turner, Patricia Byron, Katherine Garrison, Neville Baldwin, Georgeina Richardson. John Holstein, Edward Holstein, Frank Turner, Harrison Meyn Jack Reibel, Ethel Hannan, May Gehrig, Matilda Smith, Hyatt Rose, Kathleen Dickerson, Bernie Holstein, Terry Johnson, Marie Williams.

**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, Gwen Trappel, Chantal Sneddan.

## Baptisms This Week

We welcome **Rocco Lawrence**, together with his family and friends, as we celebrate his Baptism at during the 8am Mass TODAY at St Patrick's, Clarence Town.

During the same Mass, Rocco's siblings, Jack and Reese will celebrate their First Communion.

## Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for February:

Together with Pope Francis, this month we pray: *"Let us pray that the ecclesial community might welcome the desires and doubts of those young people who feel a call to serve Christ's mission in the priesthood and religious life."*

## Morning Tea at Clarence Town

The next morning tea at Clarence Town will be held after the 8am Mass TODAY (2 February) under the pergola beside the church.

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

# Alleluia!

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.

## 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.