



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.

6TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR C

16 FEBRUARY 2025

Parish Staff

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

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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.

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

Finding A New Patronal Name

There's less than TWO WEEKS to go before we close nominations in the search for a new patron for our coming new parish.

My thanks to those parishioners who have already made a suggestion—so far we have received a total of four suggestions that we are able to put before the community of our parishes is part of the process of discerning a new name, but it is still possible to add more to the list of possibilities.

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.

Submissions will close at **5pm on Friday, 28 February**, and the list with some background information will be made available on Sunday 9 March.

A vote will be taken on **Sunday 23 March** with the results announced on Sunday 30 March, after which the Bishop can be advised so the new patron can be included in the decree establishing our new parish.

Reintroduction of the Chalice

A reminder that parishioners will be asked to indicate their position on the reintroduction of Communion from the Chalice during the course of our Masses this weekend.

World Day of Prayer 2025

You are invited to join together for the World Day of Prayer for 2025 at St Paul's Anglican Church, 21 Duke Street, Paterson, on Thursday 13 March commencing at 10.30am. All are invited, and are asked to bring lunch to share in the church hall.

This year we pray for the Cook Islands, with the theme "I made you wonderful".

Prayers for the Sick

Praying for those who are sick is a Christian duty and something we should undertake both willingly and with compassion.

Parishioners are invited to review the list of people we are currently praying for, and if there are names that should be removed or added, to let Fr Andrew know (email or written note please).

GOSPEL FOCUS

Treated as the prophets

As part of his sermon, Jesus announces, 'Happy are you when people hate you, drive you out, abuse you, denounce your name as criminal, on account of the Son of Man... This was the way their ancestors treated the prophets.' The prophets of the Old Testament were the chosen spokesmen of God. Their message was often unpopular and they were often threatened and berated for challenging the social order. To be treated in this way is in fact something of an affirmation that one's words and actions are reflecting the message of God. The Word of God is confronting and challenging!

Rite of Election—RCIA

The Rite of Election, an important step in the journey of Christian Initiation for catechumens who will be baptised during the Easter Vigil in their parishes, will be celebrated in Sacred Heart Cathedral on **Sunday, 9 March** (the First Sunday of Lent), commencing at 2.30pm. The liturgy will be followed by an afternoon tea.

All are welcome to join together for this joyful and wonderful occasion to witness and prayerfully support our catechumens, those people who are unbaptised and who are seeking to become a part of the Catholic Church.

Please RSVP for catering purposes by email to mission@mn.catholic.org.au, and all enquiries and be directed to Fiona Duque by phoning 0408 895 951.

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

Baptisms Next Week

We look forward to welcoming **Everleigh, Grayson, and Avery Skillen**, together with their family and friends, as we celebrate their Baptism at 11am next Sunday at St Patrick's, Clarence Town.

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 for more information.

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 :)

Homily by Richard Leonard

The Pope had just finished a tour of the USA and was taking a limousine to San Francisco. Having never driven a limo, he asked the chauffeur if he could drive for a while.

Well, the chauffeur didn't have much choice, so he climbs in the back and the Pope takes the wheel.

The Pope starts accelerating to see what the limo could do. He gets to 130 kph and suddenly sees the lights of the highway patrol in his rear vision mirror. He pulls over, but the policeman, seeing who it is, says, 'Just a minute your Holiness, I'm going to have to call in about this one'.

The trooper asks for the chief. He tells the chief he's got someone really important pulled over.

It's not Ted Kennedy again is it?

No Chief, it's more important.

Is it the Governor?

No sir, it's more important.

Good God man, you haven't pulled over the President?

No sir, even more important.

Who the heck is more important than the President of the USA?

I don't know sir, but he's got the Pope as his chauffeur.

What you see is often not what you get.

What we have just heard in Luke's Gospel falls into this category.

When we hear the phrase 'Blessed are you' it can sound rather patronising. It can seem that Jesus glosses over all sorts of tough human realities with, 'Well done, keep it up, be happy and we'll fix it all up in heaven'.

But reading the beatitudes in this light is a direct contradiction of what Jesus says in this text and certainly how he lived it out.

The Hebrew concept of a blessing isn't about Divine pats on bowed human heads; it is about where the presence of God is to be found. In the Hebrew Scriptures, a blessing is the discovery that God is present and active in one's experience, right here and right now.

So the beatitudes are saying that we do not need to go past our own daily struggles to find the presence of God. Jesus tells us that when we see the poor, the compassionate, the mournful, those who campaign for a just society and suffer because of it, the gentle, the innocent, the peacemakers and the martyrs; we are encountering, in a special way, the presence of God.

Jesus teaches us that God is not impervious to our pain and happiness, or a great manipulator desiring terrible things to punish us or teach us something. No. The God of the beatitudes is a companion with us in every experience we go through either personally or as a community.

Luke goes on to give us the 'woes and warnings' and these are as important as the beatitudes. Luke highlights for us that every blessing carries with it a call, every gift contains a duty to share it, and every right houses within it a responsibility.

This is particularly true of our nation where the vast majority of our citizens are housed, educated, have clean drinking water, a long life span, a job and enjoy a stable democracy. This places us in the top fifteen percent of the world's population. We should discover God's presence in the midst of these blessings, but we must face up to the responsibilities they give us.

It is not good enough to be simply appalled at the widening gap between rich and poor in our own country and around the world. Today's Gospel places at our feet the challenge to do something about it, in our prayer, in our careful use of resources, in what we spend our money on and how we vote for governments which might affect international change.

The Beatitudes and warnings call us to become so transparently attentive to justice, development and peace for all people that what others see in the followers of Christ is precisely what they get.

© 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.

Confirmation in 2025

We have received notification that our parish celebration of Confirmation will take place on Friday, 14 November at St Mary's, Dungog. Bishop Michael will be attending to celebrate with us.

Further information about the 2025 journey for completing Christian Initiation can be found by going to <https://dunggogresfordcatholic.org.au/celebrations/christian-initiation/completing-christian-initiation-for-children/>.

Please pass this information to anyone you know who might find it helpful.

Today's Liturgy:

Scripture Readings: **1st** Jeremiah 17:5-8; **2nd** 1 Corinthians 15:12, 16-20; **Gospel** Luke 6:17, 20-26

Responsorial Psalm: Happy are they who hope in the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! Rejoice and be glad;
your reward is great in heaven. 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...)

6th Week in Ordinary Time, Year I

Monday 17 February

Tuesday 18 February

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Wednesday 19 February

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Thursday 20 February

9.30am Mass @ East Gresford

Friday 21 February

9.30am Mass @ Dungog (with the students
of St Joseph's to mark the start of
the school year)

Saturday 22 February

Feast of the Chair of St Peter

5.30m Mass @ East Gresford

Sunday 23 February

7th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

11am Baptisms @ Clarence Town

In Your Charity, Please Pray for:

Those Who Have Died: Stephen Samuel.

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.

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 Dungog

The next morning tea at Dungog will be held after the 9.30am Mass TODAY (16 February) in our Parish Hall. Please bring a plate to share, and join us for good food, good company, and good conversation.

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.

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.

