



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, Summerhill via Vacy.

4TH SUNDAY OF LENT, YEAR C

30 MARCH 2025

Parish Staff

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

Presbytery & Parish Office

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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.

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

And Our New Name Will Be ...

The ballots from the vote taken last weekend to discern the name of the patron saint for our new parish have now been counted.

After distribution of preferences across seven rounds, I can now advise you that the saint we have chosen is

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI

I have written to Bishop Michael to advise him of this choice and have also begun to arrange for the new name of both our patron saint and the new parish to feature in logos, signage, stationery, and all the other places.

This will mean that we are ready to move to our new identity with immediate effect from **Tuesday 1 July 2025**, being known from that date as St Francis' Parish, Dungog Gresford.

The journey to reach this point has been a long one, and I am most grateful for the way in which we have embraced this opportunity to claim a new identity as we take another huge step forward together.

Our new patron will provide us with a wide range of opportunities to explore as part of our new journey. I hope you will join me along the path.

Saint Francis, pray for us.

Have a blessed week...

Fr Andrew

Daylight Saving Time Ends

Please remember that Daylight Saving Time ends at 3am next Sunday (6 April) when our clocks go back an hour (for that extra hour of sleep!).

Please adjust your clocks before heading to bed next Saturday evening so you arrive for Mass at the correct time on Sunday.

A Day With the Lord

On Friday 11 April, the Friday just before Holy Week begins, it is proposed that St Mary's, Dungog host a day long period of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

The time will commence immediately after the 9.30am Mass and will continue until concluding with Benediction starting at 6pm.

The challenge with offering such a possibility is ensuring that the Blessed Sacrament is never left unaccompanied, that there is always someone present in the church.

At the back of St Mary's this weekend is a sign-up sheet where you can offer to participate in Adoration at some point across the day. The roster is broken up into half-hour slots, stretching from 10am until 6pm.

If you would like to participate in this celebration, please take the opportunity to add your name in one of the slots (each slot can have as many people present as they like). If you would like to add your name during the coming week, please contact Fr Andrew who can do this for you.

Please give some thought to this opportunity for a concentrated time of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament as part of your preparation for the celebration of Holy Week and the Sacred Paschal Triduum.

Please note: if we cannot fill all the available slots we will not be able to proceed.

Squashing Some Rumours

I've been told that thanks to some incomplete information published in the bulletins of other parishes, there may be rumours doing the rounds along the lines that I am leaving my current post here in Dungog & Gresford.

For the sake of clarity, and so you can let others know the truth of things, let me make it clear:

1. I am **NOT** leaving my current appointment as Parish Priest of Dungog & Gresford – and I am hoping that I will not be leaving for many years to come if at all. Indeed, my preference would be to remain where I am until I reach retirement and then stay on here afterwards.
2. It **IS** true that Bishop Michael has appointed me as Parish Priest of Gloucester and Krambach parishes, **BUT** this is in addition to my existing role here in Dungog Gresford.

So, I am not going anywhere, just adding a few more responsibilities to my existing ones, and I am looking forward to many more years here in Dungog and Gresford.

Fr Andrew

Ecumenical Service – TONIGHT

An ecumenical church service will take place on Sunday 30 March in Christ Church Anglican Church, Dowling Street, Dungog, commencing at 6.30pm. All are welcome to come together for this time of prayer.

Congratulations!

Congratulations to Denise Smith and Mary Hughes who will be presented with awards for 20 years and 15 years respectively of service as Special Religious Education Teachers ('Catechists') during the Mass at St Helen's East Gresford this weekend.

Thank you, Denise and Mary, for your commitment to this vital parish ministry.

Ordination of Anton Perera

Anton Perera will be ordained as deacon by Bishop Michael on Friday 4 April in Sacred Heart Cathedral, Newcastle West.

The liturgy will begin at 7pm. Everyone is welcome to join in celebrating this significant event in the life of our diocese.

Chrism Mass

This year's Chrism Mass will be celebrated in the evening of Tuesday 15 April at Sacred Heart Cathedral, Newcastle West commencing at 7pm.

This Mass is a significant annual liturgical event for our Diocese, and all parishioners are welcome to join together to celebrate with Bishop Michael, his clergy, and others from across the diocese.

Reintroduction of the Chalice

The reintroduction of Communion from the Chalice will take place NEXT weekend (**5 & 6 April**).

If any ministers (current or potential) still require an update on formation, training and practice, please contact Fr Andrew to make the necessary arrangements.

Way of the Cross 2025

This year's Way of the Cross will continue the diocese's pilgrimage experience that began with the Jubilee Launch. Come and walk with fellow pilgrims and build relationships as we share our responses to the Pope Francis' invitation to become agents of hope within our own communities,

Join everyone at 3pm on Sunday 6 April (you're able to gather from 2pm) at St Joseph's Church, 140 Wangi Road, Toronto. For enquiries, email mission@mn.catholic.org.au. To register go to www.eventbrite.com.au/e/the-way-of-the-cross-a-pilgrimage-of-hope-tickets-1250877762059.

Paschal Triduum Timetable 2025

With the Sacred Paschal Triduum rapidly coming to us, the schedule of *liturgical celebrations* across the Holy Three Days is as follows:

Holy Thursday, 17 April 2025

7pm Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper
St Mary's, Dungog

Good Friday, 18 April 2025

3pm Celebration of the Passion of the Lord
St Mary's, Dungog

Holy Saturday, 19 April 2025

6.30pm The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night
St Mary's, Dungog

Easter Sunday, 20 April 2025

8am Easter Mass of the Resurrection
St Patrick's, Clarence Town
10am Easter Mass of the Resurrection
St Helen's, East Gresford

In addition, I will be praying the Office of Readings and Morning Prayer publicly in St Mary's, Dungog at 8.30am on Good Friday and Holy Saturday if any parishioners would like to join me. I only ask that you let me know in advance so I can prepare a resource to assist you.

The *Stations of the Cross*, a public devotion rather than the liturgy of the Church, will be prayed at **10am** on Good Friday at St Helen's, East Gresford, at St Patrick's, Clarence Town, and at St Mary's, Dungog.

Fr Andrew

A Big Thank You!

A very big thank you to Steve Copus who has spent more than a few hours of his time pressure cleaning the pathways around the Dungog church and presbytery.

The pathways had become quite dangerous in wetter weather and Steve's efforts have made them both safer and nicer looking.

So Steve...thank you for generous contribution!

"Christian hope ... should spur us to set out 'with haste'. As disciples of the Lord, we are called to find our greater hope in him, and then, without delay, carry that hope with us, as pilgrims of light amid the darkness of this world." (Pope Francis, Homily of 24 December 2024).

Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

Truth and Reconciliation

For Jews, pigs are ritually unclean, so that living in a pig sty would make this young man unapproachable.

So, imagine the reaction of his Jewish audience when Jesus told the story of the father running to his son and embracing him still stinking of the pig sty, exclaiming, 'You were lost and now you are found.'

That is Jesus' portrayal of his heavenly Father's relationship with us.

Of course, sometimes we are the older brother, resentful that someone seems to have had too easy a time of God's forgiveness. Is this the attitude of many who challenge the emphasis by Pope Francis on Mercy as the core of God's relationship with us?

More often, we are like the younger brother who has strayed to a far off place, sometimes quite deliberately.

We could resolve to approach the Sacrament of Mercy during Lent, knowing that our heavenly Father will run towards us, embracing us, exclaiming, 'You were lost but now you are found.' That is worth a celebration!

© 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.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Customs and culture

The parable of the lost son is a fascinating study of Jewish culture and purity laws. The son could not have distanced himself more from Jewish custom. Firstly, he demanded his inheritance, effectively treating his father as dead. Secondly, he travels to a pagan land and then in despair finds himself feeding pigs – animals whose meat was forbidden to Jews. He knows that his actions have alienated him from his family and culture and yet when he returns, his father gives him a fine robe and a ring to wear – signs of a father claiming a son as his own.

Today's Liturgy:

Scripture Readings:

1st Joshua 5:9-12

2nd 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

Gospel Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

Responsorial Psalm:

Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation:

Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

I will rise and go to my Father and tell him:

Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.

Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Memorial Acclamation:

We proclaim your Death, O Lord,

and profess your Resurrection,

until you come again.

Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for March:

Together with Pope Francis, this month we pray:

"Let us pray that broken families might discover the cure for their wounds through forgiveness, rediscovering each other's gifts, even in their difference."

Morning Tea at Clarence Town

The next morning tea at Clarence Town will be held after the 8am Mass next Sunday (6 April) under the pergola beside the church. Please bring something to share, and stay for good food, good company, and good conversation.

Repent!

In Your Charity, Please Pray For:

Those Who Have Died: Gloria Curry.

Those Whose Anniversary of Death Is In March:

Gordon Smith, Dan Harrison, Linda Gleeson, Vincent Smith, Marie Williams, Gwen Richards, Alexander Loudon, Claude McGinty, Herb Trappel, Allan Turner, Arthur Preece, Thelma Lowe, Joyce Copus, Leo Maher, Matthew Harding, Vincent Lane, Vince Banister, Gerry Gehrig, Terry Johnson, Philip Gippel, Sr Patricia McGinty RSM.

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, Tom Redgrove, John Newton.

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

4th Week of Lent

Monday 31 March

Tuesday 1 April

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Wednesday 2 April

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Thursday 3 April

9.30am Mass @ East Gresford

Friday 4 April

11am Anointing Mass @ Lara Aged Care

Saturday 5 April

5.30pm Mass @ East Gresford

Sunday 6 April

5th Sunday of Lent, Year C

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9.30am Mass @ Dungog



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: either by phoning 4979 1390 or sending an email to childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au. Visit the website of the Office of Safeguarding for resources and further information. The website can be found at www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au.

The Catholic Parishes of Dungog and Gresford acknowledge the people of the Worimi and Wonnarua nations, 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.