



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.

5TH SUNDAY OF LENT, YEAR C

6 APRIL 2025

Parish Staff

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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.

A Pastoral Note ...

It's April!

When did that happen? I could have sworn it was Christmas Day only yesterday.

I don't know about you but as I get older time seems to develop its own 'speed' of going by, even though I know that, scientifically speaking, such thoughts are a load a nonsense.

In just two short weeks we will celebrate the great Festival of Easter, the highpoint of our liturgical year and the very reason why we believe what we believe.

The Death and Resurrection of Jesus, which we will celebrate at Easter but which we commemorate each Sunday, lies at the very heart of the Christian faith. If Jesus had not been raised from the dead then the first followers of Jesus would not have remembered what he taught them, would not have recalled all his mighty works, would not have been compelled to go out to all the nations.

We prepare ourselves for the celebration of Easter each year with the Season of Lent, whose fifth Sunday we celebrate this weekend. This is our chance to prepare ourselves through prayer, fasting and acts of charity.

We need not be perturbed, however, that it's too late to embrace the opportunities Lent offers us. It is not, and it never is.

So, let's prepare well in these final two weeks for our celebration of Sacred Paschal Triduum and the Season of Easter that begins on Easter Sunday. Let's make sure that every opportunity that Lent has provided has been embraced. Let's open our very being to the Death and Resurrection of Jesus and all that comes with it.

Have a blessed week...

Fr Andrew

Palm Sunday at East Gresford

This year's celebration of Palm Sunday falls on the second Sunday of the month, and thus normally be celebrated at Sacred Heart Church, Summer Hill.

Recent weather has created some access issues at Summer Hill, so the decision has been made to celebrate Mass at St Helen's, East Gresford on Saturday 12 April at the usual time of 5.30pm.

Reintroduction of the Chalice

The reintroduction of Communion from the Chalice will take place THIS 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.

A gentle reminder that you are politely requested to not receive Communion from the Chalice if you are unwell at any point. This is an act of charity towards your fellow parishioners and assists in keeping everyone safe.

Fr Andrew

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.

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



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.

Homily by Fr Michael Tate

The Gaze of Jesus

Where is the *man* in this story? Notice it is the *woman* who is taken, afraid for her life, and made to stand in the middle of the mob.

Where was the man? Century after century, it is women who have been stereotyped as the seductresses and have borne the blame, and been made to suffer, whilst the men get off scot-free, discarding the women to their fate.

But, that is not the aspect of the story I want to focus on.

This story is all about 'eyes' and how you 'see' someone.

The accusers of this woman make her 'stand there in *full view* of everybody.'

She is surrounded by the hostile glare of eyes filled with blood lust – eyes full of condemnation and hate – eyes boring in on her dishevelled and distressed state – eyes which already see her as a mess of crushed skull and broken bones from the stoning they are anticipating.

Jesus *never* looks at the woman while she is being accused.

It is only when the accusers have left in embarrassment that Jesus, who has been bent to the ground doodling in the dust, looks up at her.

Isn't that remarkable!

Jesus – the Lord of the Universe

Jesus – the one whom angels worship

Jesus – the human expression of the All Merciful does not tower over her – but '*looks up*'.

He is the one on the ground. He is the truly '*earthed*' one in this story.

He is so well grounded that he is quite content to adopt the posture of a slave.

Can you imagine the electricity in that glance upwards of Jesus?

– not the condemning *glare*, but the gaze of love
– a look which sees her as God intended her to be
– a look which sees her potential
– which sees her as she could be if she gives up her current pattern of behaviour.

And then Jesus speaks to her!

Up till now, *no-one* has spoken to this woman; she has been a mere object.

Now, she is not only reassured by his eyes. She hears his voice. He is treating her as a human being worth speaking to.

And what does she hear?

That Jesus has a better way of dealing with sin than condemnation and punishment.

I am reminded of the new story of a bishop in South America who severely criticised rigid priests in his diocese who had refused to baptise the child of an unmarried woman. He called them hypocrites, praised the young woman who had carried the baby to term, and lamented the fact that she had had to wander from presbytery to presbytery for the baptism of her child.

That bishop acted in total harmony with today's gospel. That bishop was elected as Pope. That is why I am so full of hope for the future of the Church.

Jesus' method is indeed pastoral. He looks at the woman, he talks to the woman, he looks and talks in a way which rescues us from the past and frees us to live a new sort of life in the future.

Only then: 'Go, sin no more.'

Yes, the challenge is given to me to give up some behaviour which may be harmful to another, and is always dehumanising for me. But the challenge only comes after Our Lord has affirmed that I am a person worth his looking at and talking with.

Do we really believe in *this* scenario?

Don't you know from your own experience that a look, a glance, can change the future? Haven't you felt the electricity when eyes lock, perhaps across a crowded room?

Jesus looks at you, looks at me, that way.

Do you have the courage to 'lock eyes' with Jesus and live out the consequences?

'The eyes have it.'

© 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.

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 Isaiah 43:16-21
2nd Philippians 3:8-14
Gospel John 8:1-11

Responsorial Psalm:

The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy

Gospel Acclamation:

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

With all your heart turn to me, for I am tender and compassionate.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

Memorial Acclamation:

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

Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for April:

Together with Pope Francis, this month we pray:
"Let us pray that the use of new technologies will not replace human relationships, will respect the dignity of the person, and will help us face the crises of our times."

Morning Tea at Clarence Town

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

Repent!

In Your Charity, Please Pray For:

Those Who Have Died:

Those Whose Anniversary of Death Is In April: Bede Gehrig, Ruth Jones, Lenore McDermott, Paula Murphy, Robert Holdom, Dorothy Bowtell, Rex Garland, Bruno Rocco, Herbert John Preece, Allie Allen, Peter Allen, Tom O'Driscoll, Paddy Kilpinen, Bill Tyne, Neil Faber, Lyn Barry, Michael Flanagan, Paul Cooper.

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...)

5th Week of Lent

Monday 7 April

Tuesday 8 April

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Wednesday 9 April

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Thursday 10 April

9.30am Mass @ East Gresford

Friday 11 April

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

10am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament @ Dungog – to be followed by

6pm Benediction @ Dungog

Saturday 12 April

10am Baptism @ Clarence Town

5.30pm Mass @ East Gresford

Sunday 13 April

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

Baptism Next Weekend

We look forward to welcoming Lily Salter, together with her family and friends, as we celebrate her Baptism at 10am in St Patrick's Church, Clarence Town. Please remember Lily and her family in your prayers.

Safeguarding in our Parishes means ...

The Parishes of Dungog & Gresford hold that children, young people and vulnerable adults are a gift from God with an intrinsic right to dignity of life, respect and security from physical and emotional harm. They are to be treasured, nurtured and safeguarded.

In line with the Safeguarding Policy of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle, our parishes have zero tolerance for all forms of abuse and are committed to safeguarding all who interact with the parishes through our activities, ministries and services, especially children and adults at risk.

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.