



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.

3RD SUNDAY OF EASTER, YEAR C

4 MAY 2025

Parish Staff

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

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.

Did You Know?

Everyone would be aware, even vaguely, that the life of the Church is governed by a Universal Calendar, that list of dates which tells us what liturgical feast is supposed to be celebrated on any particular day.

There are many components that are to be found on that list, some of which have movable dates (like Easter) and others which are always on the same date (such as the Feast of St Andrew on 30 November, for example).

Working our way through that list day by day allows the Church to celebrate a significant range of events at the appropriate time and with the appropriate level of solemnity.

What many people may not know is that each parish is supposed to add several additional occasions to the general calendar, representing dates of significance for a local community. These dates can include the anniversary of the dedication of a church building, the feast day of a patron saint of the parish or a particular church building, along with a few others.

Sometimes these additions are not 'new' but might represent an 'upgrade' in the level of solemnity of a particular date.

I mention this because, in preparing for the merging of our two parishes, I've been doing some research about the dates that will become significant for the new parish.

And so, for your information, you might be like to know which dates across a year might be of some significance in the life of the new parish. You will find these dates added to the calendar that is accessible from our website – you can subscribe to that calendar if you would like to so you can have the dates accessible electronically in whichever way you do that.

(cont'd)

Anniversary of Dedications

To the best of my knowledge, none of the church buildings in our two parishes have been dedicated. Some have been 'blessed' but that is a different status.

This means that no Anniversaries of Dedication will be included in our annual round of liturgical celebrations.

Patronal Feasts of the Parish

In choosing St Francis of Assisi as the patron of our new parish, his feast day (4 October) becomes a very significant day for us.

Usually celebrated as a Memorial, it will in future be celebrated as a Solemnity.

Patronal Feasts of Church Buildings

Three of our church buildings have fixed dates for their patronal feasts, all of which will also be celebrated as Solemnities going forward.

Clarence Town	17 March	St Patrick
Dungog	15 August	The Assumption
East Gresford	18 August	St Helen

The other church building, Sacred Heart, Summer Hill, has a movable patronal feast day since the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is celebrated on "the Friday after the second Sunday after Pentecost" (yes, we Catholics do like to make things complicated!).

In 2025, this will be Friday 27 June, while in 2026, it will be Friday 12 June.

Other Significant Dates

There will be two other dates of significance for our new parish. The first will be the anniversary of our canonical erection (1 July). The second will be Feast of St Joseph, our school's patron, which is celebrated on 19 March each year.

We will do our best to celebrate each and every one of these dates/opportunities each year as part of our parish life. So, stay tuned across the years for notices in the bulletin!

The Universalis App

For those who like to pray the Liturgy of the Hours – or those like Fr Andrew who are bound to do so – there exists an App for your phone or tablet device which can make this easier, especially when travelling.

Called *Universalis*, it can be downloaded from the App Store for whichever style of phone you have, and the one-time purchase is very cheap (under \$20).

For more information about this app, you can visit their website www.universalis.com which has all the information you might need.

Scam Email Warning

It was brought to my attention during the week that an email is circulating, supposedly from me, informing the recipient that I need them to do something from me.

This is a well-known scam format.

To be clear, I would never – indeed, will never – send an email simply asking you to do something for me, or do me a favour, etc. If I feel a need to ask someone to do something for me, I will call you directly or speak to you face to face. I was always taught this is the correct and polite approach.

If you receive an email from "me", double check it comes from my official diocesan email address, if it doesn't then be sceptical. If in doubt, call me.

Fr Andrew

Mass for the Election of a Pope

With the Conclave to elect a successor to Pope Francis beginning in Rome on Wednesday 7 May, our parish Mass on Tuesday 6 May will be held at 5.30pm.

At that Mass, we will pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit as the Conclave gathers to undertake this important task in the life of our Church.

Summer Hill Mass – Sunday 11 May

It would be our normal approach to things to head to Sacred Heart Church, Summer Hill next Sunday for Mass at 11.30am.

The recent rain has made access to the church difficult, so it has been determined not to attempt to do so.

Instead, Mass will be celebrated at St Helen's, East Gresford at the usual time of 5.30pm on Saturday evening 10 May.



Finalising Project Compassion

It would be appreciated if any remaining Project Compassion contributions could be sent to the Parish Office next Sunday.

This will allow the finalisation of the annual appeal and the remittance of the collection to Caritas Australia in order that it be put to good use.

Homily by Richard Leonard

The Shawshank Redemption was the hit film of 1994. In it we follow the incarceration and escape plans of Tim Robbins and Morgan Freeman. Robbins is condemned to life imprisonment for the murder of his wife and her lover. Freeman says he is the 'only guilty man in Shawshank Prison'. Based on Stephen King's novella, this uplifting film is a surprise package from a writer whose fame comes from the horror genre.

The longer we watch the film, the more we realise that Stephen King has modelled his story on the Gospel of John. It is, in many respects a more modern parable about John's portrait of Jesus. Tim Robbins' character, Andy, like Jesus, is an innocent man, treated harshly by the authorities of his day. He has to endure the condemnation and cruelty of the leading religious zealots who are keepers of law and order, while he inspires others to think of a world free of subjection and oppression where they can be free to live the life of which they dream. Like John's Jesus, Andy has big dreams and often talks in riddles, but he leaves clues for others to follow him in their quest for freedom.

In the last part of the film, after Andy has successfully escaped and the governor of the prison has been exposed for the hypocrite he is, Freeman is paroled after serving 35 years hard labour. He decides to go where Andy has gone and, just as Andy promised when they were together in prison, he finds that Andy has prepared the way for him to follow. The moving climax of the film comes as Robbins and Freeman meet on a beach, embrace each other and share food and drink to celebrate the new life both of them have discovered.

Stephen King understands John's portrait of Jesus very well. For all of Jesus' assuredness and composure throughout the Gospel, the sense of care and intimacy in the encounters with his friends is deeply moving.

In the Easter Gospel to which we have just listened, Jesus returns to where his friends have fled from Jerusalem. In a parable about the growing numbers of the early Church, the Eucharist and the suffering they are enduring, John reaffirms that Jesus is intimately present in their following of him and their suffering for the Kingdom. The only sense John can make of Jesus' death, the martyrdom of the apostles or the persecution of the early church is to see them all as acts of love. 'No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends.'

Those of us who have been caught up in the net of God's love are heirs to the same promises of Jesus' fidelity. Christ is intimately present to us in every act of loving sacrifice we undertake for him. He

continues to send us out to tell people of the place that has been prepared for them at the banquet of life and he gives us strength to gird our loins for the times when life takes us to places we would rather not go.

In this Eucharist let's be grateful for this Easter season when we celebrate again that we have been set free from the prison of our fears and shown the way to live a life of sacrificial love and undeserved redemption.

© 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.

Historical **Context**

Feed my sheep

When Jesus asks Peter, "Do you love me?" and Peter repeatedly assures Jesus that he does, Jesus instructs Peter to "Feed my sheep." This image of feeding sheep is used to describe the caring leadership Peter is to take over the other disciples and the other followers of Jesus. The image of a shepherd has carried through the years and finds expression in the stylised shepherd's crook (crosier) that is carried as a symbol of office by bishops. The people of the church are often referred to as the bishop's flock – further carrying on the image of a shepherd and his sheep.

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 Acts 5:27-32, 40-41

2nd Revelation 5:11-14

Gospel John 21:1-19

Responsorial Psalm:

The Lamb that was sacrificed is worthy to be given power, wealth, glory, and blessing.

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

Christ is risen, the Lord of all creation;
he has shown pity on all people.
Alleluia!

Memorial Acclamation:

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

Morning Tea at Clarence Town

The next morning tea at St Patrick's, Clarence Town will take place after the 8am Mass TODAY (4 May).

Please stay to enjoy refreshment, conversation and company.

Alleluia!

In Your Charity, Please Pray For:

Those Who Have Died: Pope Francis, Fr Maurie Cahill

Those Whose Anniversary of Death Is In April: Ray Johnson, Danny Robertson, Eileen Moylan, Nita Ford, Mary Kealy, Ted McFadyen, Evelyn Martin, Clarke Deards, Don Trow, Margaret Smith, Alvin Robertson, Carmel Hudson, Steve Bartlett, Fr Peter Williams, Ian Tope, Dulcie Hepworth, Jenny Szymec, Catherine Atkins, Irene Byron, Bill & Hannah Byron, Helen Cooper, Rodney Ryan, Gordon Ryan, Joyce Little, Jan Graboski, Betty Vell, Cecilia Catherine Wilson, Pam Williams, Maisie Trow, Bruce Clark.

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, Gwen Trappel, Tom Redgrove.

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

Third Week of Easter

Monday 5 May

Tuesday 6 May

5.30pm Mass @ Dungog

Wednesday 7 May

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Thursday 8 May

9.30am Mass @ East Gresford

Friday 9 May

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

Saturday 10 May

11am Baptisms @ Clarence Town

5.30pm Mass @ East Gresford

Sunday 11 May

Fourth Sunday of Easter

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

Baptisms Next Weeks

We look forward to welcoming **Isabelle & Matilda James**, together with their family and friends, as we celebrated their baptisms next Saturday at 11am in St Patrick's Church, Clarence Town.

Papal Prayer Intention for May:

"Let us pray that through work, each person might find fulfilment, families might be sustained in dignity, and that society might be humanised."

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.