



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 EASTER, YEAR C

18 MAY 2025

Parish Staff

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

Presbytery & Parish Office

55 Brown Street, Dungog
PO Box 24, Dungog NSW 2420

P: (02) 4992 1477

E: dungog.parish@mn.catholic.org.au

Emergency contact for Fr Andrew: 0412 405 671

Office Hours

Tuesdays & Fridays, 10am – 1pm

Other Contacts

Clarence Town

Val Preece (0403 252 434, 4996 4474, or email
vpreece15@gmail.com)

Gresford

Faith Banister (0427 536 248)

Parish School

St Joseph's Primary School
49 Brown Street, Dungog NSW 2420
Mrs Lisa McNeilly (*Principal*)

P: (02) 4992 1377

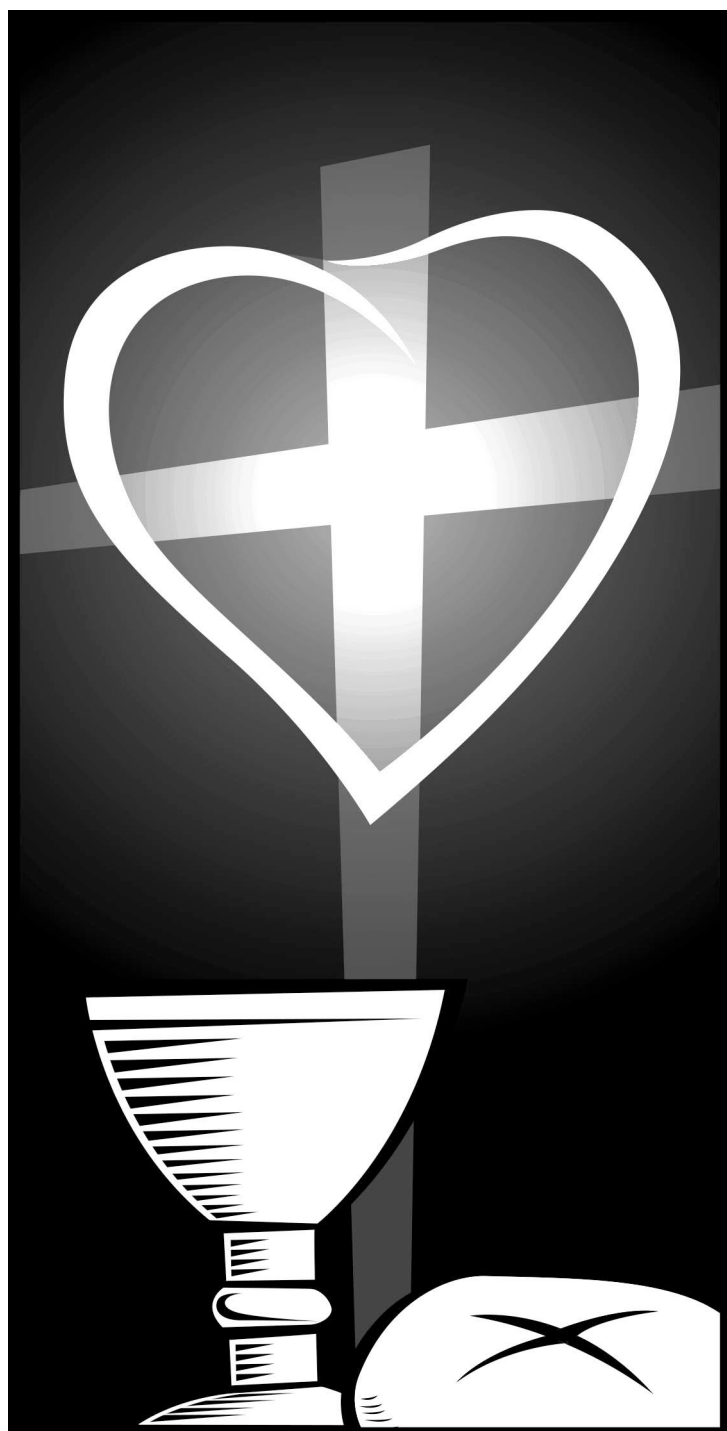
E: admin@dungog.catholic.edu.au

W: www.dungog.catholic.edu.au

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...

What a whirlwind the last ten days has been in the life of the Church.

Following the election of Pope Leo XIV on 8 May – yes, just ten days ago! – there has been a flurry of activity focussing on who he is, what he's about, what his first steps might be.

All of which is largely unhelpful because, contrary to popular belief and the machinations of the (mainly American) media, the past actions and words of Robert Prevost, as a man, an Augustinian, a priest, a bishop, and as a cardinal, are not an accurate prediction of what Pope Leo might do or say in the future.

Indeed, one of my great bugbears is the attribution of something said or done by Robert Prevost prior to 8 May 2025 as now being the words or actions of Pope Leo XIV. It's just wrong.

My point is that what will happen in the Church under the leadership of Pope Leo will unfold as the future unfolds and cannot be predetermined from what has gone before. Part of our role as members of the Church is to support Pope Leo in prayer and committing ourselves to playing our rightful part in the life of Church as it unfolds in the future.

That responsibility is not a passive undertaking. It's not simply 'supporting' the Pope and the hierarchy in their actions. On the contrary, the responsibility of playing our part requires active engagement, a willingness to live our baptismal priesthood in ways that God reveals to each of us.

This responsibility is not simply optional; it's inherent to our lives in Christ that began when, at our baptism, we went into the tomb with Jesus and rose with him to new life with the Risen Jesus.

On Sunday 18 May in Rome (Sunday evening here) Pope Leo will celebrate Mass in the Piazza in front of St Peter's Basilica to mark the beginning of his ministry as Bishop of Rome and thus as Pope. This is a significant moment for him and for the Church as together we intercede for God's blessing on Pope Leo's future ministry.

On this day, let's pray for our Pope as he takes up leadership of our Church in these challenging times for it and for the world, but let's also pray that we might receive the grace to take up the fullness of our role in the life of the Church alongside Pope Leo.

Fr Andrew

NB: For those who might wish to watch the Mass for the Inauguration of the Petrine Ministry of Pope Leo XIV (to use its full and convoluted name), the best option may be via the Vatican's YouTube channel - www.youtube.com/watch?v=EEM7a3mHMR4

National Patronal Feast

Australia's national Patronal Feast – the Solemnity of Our Lady, Help of Christians – is celebrated on 24 May each year.

As this year the date falls on a Saturday, Mass will be celebrated for the Solemnity at 9.30am at St Mary's, Dungog.

All are welcome to come together to pray for our nation as we celebrate Australia's Patronal Feast.

Fr Andrew Away From Parishes

I will be away from the Parishes from the afternoon of today (Sunday 18 May) until later in the day on Tuesday 20 May.

As a result, there will be no Mass on Tuesday morning (20 May), and St Mary's Church will not be open during the day as it normally is.

Fr Andrew

Alleluia!

A Pilgrimage Around Our Parish

As we prepare to merge our two parishes into the new Parish of St Francis of Assisi, Dungog Gresford, I'd like to propose a little pilgrimage around the churches of what will become St Francis of Assisi Parish, Dungog Gresford.

Accordingly, I'd like to suggest that on Saturday 28 June – the weekend just before we become a new parish – those who would like to do so might come together and visit each of the four churches and, at each, pray together for the future.

Starting at St Mary's, Dungog, we would then travel to St Patrick's, Clarence Town, across to Sacred Heart, Summer Hill (weather permitting), and then finally conclude at St Helen's, East Gresford.

If we start at, say, 8.30am, I believe we could make the journey easily enough to conclude by lunch time.

Carpooling would be ideal, both for ease and to promote participation.

If people would like to join me on Saturday 28 June, please put the date in your diary now, and stay tuned for further information in the bulletins as the day gets closer.

Fr Andrew

Homily by Richard Leonard

The word *love* has to be the most misused word in our language. We often say we love our house, our car, our holiday or even ice cream. Then we use exactly the same word to describe our feelings for our spouse, family, friends or children. If language is a window into meaning, then we are in strife at the loose way we transfer the same word for vastly different feelings and realities. At least I hope we feel differently about people over possessions. The way some people go on about their car, pets or money we begin to wonder.

The love Jesus encourages us to have in today's Gospel is a very particular love. He tells us not just to love one another, but to 'love as I have loved you'. The core of Jesus' love for us is sacrificial love, where he laid down his life that we might live. While love is a popular word, and even more popular notion, in our music, film, art and literature, sacrificial love is not something we hear much about these days or that we embrace very easily. Loving someone in the popular imagination has come to mean hanging in there until someone better comes along, or we grow bored of each other sexually or personally. Often it entails keeping the exit door on commitment nice and handy for the quick get away. But this hardly describes a love that involves sacrifice.

Sacrificial love is demonstrated in deeds not words. It states that there is no point in saying we love anyone unless our actions follow the profession we make. Sacrificial love is not just about warm and fuzzy feelings; it is an intensely practical affair where our love is judged by our gentleness, kindness and patience with each other. Christian love is not arrogant or rude, it does not drag other people down, but rejoices and weeps when others are successful or downhearted. Loving as Jesus has loved means telling the truth with compassion, forgiving, working at trust and holding on to faith in the face of difficult times. Jesus does not promise us that this commandment is easy, just necessary if we are to love as he loves us.

While sacrificial love demands of us that we die unto self, Jesus never asked us to 'kill' ourselves. The distinction matters. All too often the Church has been guilty of giving out this teaching in a way that people thought they should put up with violent, undignified and soul-destroying behaviour from their spouse, children, parents, family or friends. Sacrificial love is never destructive. It is a free gift where we sometimes forego other options, opportunities and even good things for a love and life that is even better. The Lord laid down his life for us and in turn the Father raised him up to a glorified life. What's true for him is true for us. We lay down our lives for each other so we can take up a new and richer life. We are never meant to destroy

ourselves or stay in relationships that rip our dignity from us. Sometimes the most Christian thing we can do is to set up boundaries or make decisions that protect ourselves from behaviour which is neither loving nor Christian.

May this Eucharist then grant us the wisdom to love people and not things. May it help us embrace sacrifice in a way that leads to life and may it give courage to sort out the relationships that affirm our dignity and help us grow in faith, hope and love.

© 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.

Scriptural Context

Love is all around

Love surrounds us all the time. It is impossible to turn on a radio without hearing "love" used in one way or another. Love is the most common theme of songs, poetry, literature and art. Although we might bemoan the casual use of 'love', the fact remains that we fill our lives with the sounds and images of love. It's easier to imagine the all-pervasive nature of God's love when we recognise just how pervasive the commercial and artistic expressions of love have become. As Christian people, the challenge that faces us is to imbue these expressions with a richer, deeper notion of love.

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:

Responsorial Psalm:

I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God.

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

I give you a new commandment:
love one another as I have loved you.
Alleluia!

Memorial Acclamation:

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



In Your Charity, Please Pray For:

Those Who Have Died:

Those Whose Anniversary of Death Is In May: 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.

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.

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

Fifth Week of Easter

Monday 19 May

Tuesday 20 May

NO MASS Fr Andrew away from parishes.

Wednesday 21 May

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Thursday 22 May

9.30am Mass @ East Gresford

Friday 23 May

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

Saturday 24 May

Solemnity of Our Lady, Help of Christians

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

5.30pm Mass @ East Gresford

Sunday 25 May

Sixth Sunday of Easter

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9.30am Mass @ Dungog`

Morning Tea at Dungog

The next morning tea at St Mary's, Dungog will take place after the 9.30am Mass TODAY (18 May).

Please join us in the Parish Hall after Mass to enjoy refreshment, conversation and company.

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.

For more information and resources, please visit the website of the Office of Safeguarding [here](#).

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.