



# 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.

## 6TH SUNDAY OF EASTER, YEAR C

### 25 MAY 2025

#### Parish Staff

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

#### Presbytery & Parish Office

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#### Other Contacts

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Gresford

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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](http://www.dungoggresfordcatholic.org.au).

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



### **A Pastoral Note...**

There's a joke about rural folk that goes along the lines of...

*The nurse on duty at the small country hospital took a phone call from one of the local farmers who told her that he was coming in because he didn't feel well. The nurse hung up the phone and turned to her colleague and told him that Bob Jones was coming in.*

*The colleague, well used to the ways of country life, just nodded and said "I guess his wife Betty told him he had to and is bringing him in."*

*The nurse looked him and said, "No, he's coming because he thinks he should."*

*At which point they look at each other, start to panic, and put the local helicopter on standby.*

It may be a joke, but like many jokes there's a kernel of truth in it.

One of the things I've always admired about the people who live in more rural areas, such as we do, is that they tend to take natural events, such as prolonged rain or extended drought, in their stride. They may gripe to one another over a quiet beverage at the local but, by and large, they simply get on with things.

This last week has been a good example of that. The weather has been foul at times, and the amount of water that is floating around has proved somewhat of an inconvenience. Yet I've not heard much in the way of anything remotely near serious complaining. Gripes? Yes. Serious complaining? No.

For Christians, the ups and downs of daily life – even in the absence of serious rainfall and flooding – are generally taken as what they are: nothing more than the vagaries of life. They are not seen as punishment from God, either individually or corporately, but just the kind of things that happen.

And, as such, they are met with the kind of hope that comes from trusting in God's gracious love for God's people. Hope permits the believer to put one foot in front of the other and simply 'get on with things' today and tomorrow.

So, keep hoping, keep putting one foot in front of the other, and, above all, look out for each other. That's what Christians, the people of hope, do in the face of the more trying times, those moments when faced with the ups and downs of 'normal' life.

Stay safe, stay dry (if you can), look out for each other, and have a blessed week...

Fr Andrew

### **Fr Andrew Away From Parishes**

Weather permitting, I will be attending the Clergy Conference in Newcastle on Wednesday and Thursday this coming week. The agenda is full of topics that will have some bearing on the life of our parishes (or parish) over the coming years, so I do hope that I will be able to get there.

On Friday, I will be in Sydney to attend meetings as part of a national responsibility I have been given. I shall return to Dungog on Saturday morning in time for the weekend Masses.

All of this is, of course, thoroughly dependent on the weather and how it unfolds in the coming days – further information will be posted on the website as it becomes available.

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

Have you noticed how many books, films, television and radio programs harken back to yesteryear? 'Retrospectives' are huge in the art world. Have you noticed when musicians play more romantic classical music in the first half and contemporary music in the second half that people leave at half time? It seems the public likes the art of the 19th Century more than that of today. Nostalgia is big business and we cannot get enough of it.

Nostalgia literally means 'a yearning for home'. And if our artistic tastes reveal anything about who we are at present, maybe the home we yearn for is where things are clearer, roles are more defined, accepted harmony is developed and discord and dissonance is avoided – at least in public.

In today's Gospel, Jesus says that as a result of our love for him and fidelity to his word, the Father will come and make a home with us. The image of God as homemaker is, sadly, not very developed in Christian spirituality, maybe because too many undomesticated men have had too much of the say for far too long! But this is an image that holds a lot for how and where we meet God.

The best homes are places where we relax because we are ourselves, we are known and we know the others with whom we live. It's a common experience, for example, that when we have been out from our homes, as soon as we enter our front door we want to go to the loo. There is something intimate and familiar about our home that enables us to relax on many levels as we turn the key. Home is an earthy place where we don't get away with much and our vulnerability can be on display. Christian homes are particularly hospitable places, where Christ dwells in them to the degree that dignity, love and forgiveness are present.

A home, however, is more than a house in which people live. Homes need work and attention. A friend of mine says memories rarely just happen, they need to be created. That's the sort of attention to a family's life that turns a house into a home.

And this is the world in which God enters our lives. God wants us to be relaxed and vulnerable in God's presence. We don't need to put on a show or say what we think God wants to hear, that's a theatre where we preform, not a home where we know each other. Easter faith is about being comfortable and intimate, about being who we are, rather than the persona we would prefer God to see.

As with most of our homes, being at home with God has its ups and downs, days when we think we cannot bear to stay one more moment, other days

where we could never imagine being anywhere else and then most days where we are neither up nor down and we just get on with the routine of our lives. God the homemaker remains faithful through it all, offering the gift of Easter peace, sending us out to proclaim Christ's Kingdom, welcoming us home eager to learn how everything went and reassuring us always that while God is at home with us our hearts should never be troubled and we are not to be afraid.

For Christians, nostalgia is not about living in the past, it is about yearning for the sort of home where our heart truly is.

© 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.



## Electronic Banking Details

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## Today's Liturgy:

### Responsorial Psalm:

O God, let all the nations praise you!

### Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

All who love me will keep my words,  
and my Father will love them and we will come to  
them.

Alleluia!

### Memorial Acclamation:

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

## Baptisms Next Week

We look forward to welcoming **Archie & Charlie Beutel**, together with their family and friends, as we celebrate their baptisms at 11am next Sunday in St Mary's, Dungog.

Please remember Archie & Charlie in your prayers.

## Morning Tea at Clarence Town

The next morning tea at St Patrick's, Clarence Town will take place after the 8am Mass next Sunday (1 June) – weather permitting!

Please bring a plate to share, and join us after Mass to enjoy refreshment, conversation and company.

## 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...)

### Sixth Week of Easter

Monday 26 May

Memorial of St Philip Neri

Tuesday 27 May

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Wednesday 28 May

**NO MASS** Fr Andrew in Newcastle to attend Clergy Conference

Thursday 29 May

**NO MASS** Fr Andrew in Newcastle to attend Clergy Conference

Friday 30 May

**NO MASS** Fr Andrew attending meetings in Sydney

Saturday 31 May

Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

5.30pm Mass @ East Gresford

Sunday 1 June

Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

11am Baptisms @ Dungog

## 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.