



# 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.

## THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD, YEAR C

### 1 JUNE 2025

#### Parish Staff

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

#### Presbytery & Parish Office

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#### Office Hours

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#### Other Contacts

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Val Preece (0403 252 434, 4996 4474, or email  
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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

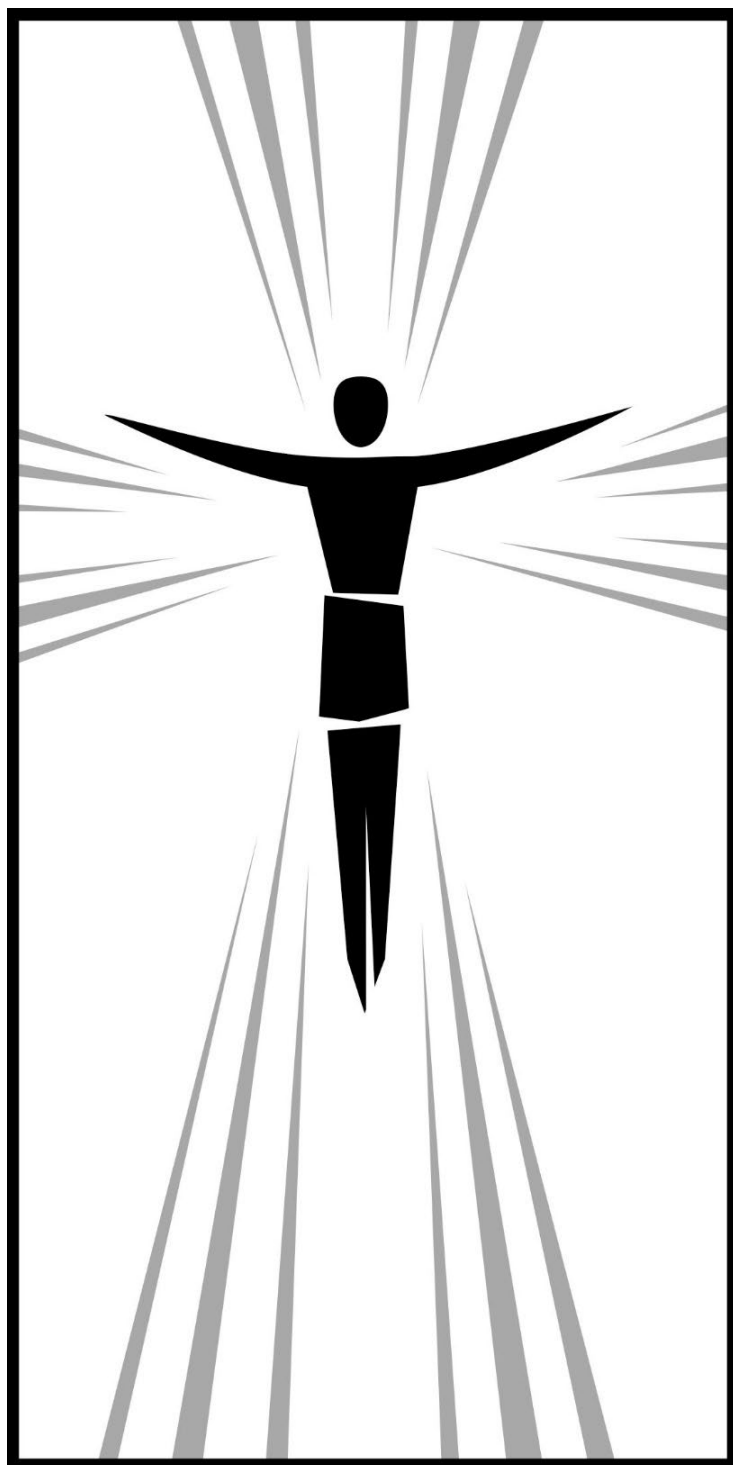
E: [admin@dungog.catholic.edu.au](mailto:admin@dungog.catholic.edu.au)

W: [www.dungog.catholic.edu.au](http://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](http://www.dungoggresfordcatholic.org.au).

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



### A Pastoral Note...

I know I've said it recently, but it really needs to be said again: what a whirlwind across the last few weeks!

So much has happened: the death of a pope, the election of his successor; rains and floods have inundated, and inconvenienced, our local area, and caused major damage just to our north; and all of a sudden it's the beginning of June and we're celebrating the Feast of the Ascension of the Lord!

Surely, Lent only ended yesterday...

The Clergy Conference I attended during the week was an interesting one, with lots of detailed information provided to the priests and deacons who were in attendance (which was most of us). There was a lot of conversation around some of the initiatives being considered at a diocesan level to revitalise parishes as the centres of Church life in our diocese, and I will have some more to say about that in the coming months as those initiatives take further shape and begin to become available for us to consider embracing.

In the meantime, have a blessed week...

Fr Andrew

### Bishop's Flood Appeal – Manning Community

In direct response to the ongoing need of flood-impacted people in the Manning, Bishop Michael has launched a Flood Appeal to directly support those who have moved into the recovery phase.

The appeal will collect and distribute funds to the local parishes who are providing on the ground support to people as they seek to rebuild their lives.

In launching the appeal, Bishop Michael has once again written to the people of our diocesan family. A copy of his letter is available at the notice board of our churches this weekend, along with a flyer containing a QR code for people to make a donation via the Diocesan website.

That link is also available by going to <https://mn.catholic.org.au/bishopsappeal/>. This link also contains the bank account details for anyone wishing to contribute via direct bank transfer rather than by providing credit card details. The Catholic Community Fund has undertaken to match all donations received up to an amount of \$25,000.

As Bishop Michael writes:

*"Let us continue to be a people of compassion and action. In times like these, the Gospel is made visible not in our words, but in our willingness to accompany and uplift one another."*

# Alleluia!

## LIVING THE GOSPEL

### You will be my witnesses

*Organisers of the twenty-third World Youth Day hosted by Sydney in 2008 took as its theme verse 8 of the passage from Acts 1 that is today's first reading: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you will be my witnesses." The choice of this theme for a world-wide gathering of young people of faith is a significant reminder of the call of Jesus to go out to the ends of the earth and to bear witness to his message. These are the final words on earth attributed to Jesus and they echo to us through time.*

### 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

A teacher told me recently that when she asked her grade fours to draw a picture of the Ascension, not unsurprisingly most of them did a fairly conventional portrait of Jesus rising up on a cloud. One of her students, David, who is a particularly gifted artist, had Jesus blasting off into the sky. Down the side of Jesus' pure white garment was the word NASA and David provided all the sound effects for how he imagined the scene of the first Ascension. He concluded, without a hint of irony, that, 'the Ascension must have been a real blast!'

None of us can blame David for marrying our modern culture with an ancient story. In fact if some of us are honest, David's 'space shuttle Jesus' is not far from what we think as well.

The Ascension stories, however, are not primarily interested in how or when Jesus got back to heaven. John and Paul never mention it at all. Mark and Matthew have it happening on the same day as the Resurrection and Luke has it occurring 40 days after Easter on the same day as Pentecost. The one thing, on which all the New Testament writers agree, is where in heaven Jesus went and where he is presently – at God's right hand.

Even to this day, being on someone's right is a place of honour. In the Old Testament being on the right hand of David, Samuel or Elijah was to be the anointed and favoured one, the true son or daughter. In telling us, then, that Jesus is now at God's right hand, the Gospels use a formal phrase to announce that God affirms everything Jesus said and did on earth and that he is the way for us to follow.

That can be all well and good, but Jesus goes one step further and that's why this feast is so important. Jesus taught us that where he is, so shall we be, that he was going to prepare a place for us and that, in and through him, we will have life and have it to the full.

The feast of the Ascension is the day, each year, where we remember and we celebrate that, just as Jesus was welcomed to God's right hand, so, too, shall we be welcomed to the right hand of Jesus. This is his promise, this is our faith and this is the hope we are called to proclaim to the world. And let's be clear about the invitation. There is nothing we have ever done, are doing, or will do, that will get our name removed from the invitation list to the feast of Christ's kingdom. The challenge is accepting that we have a standing invitation and living lives worthy of the love that places our name on the list. The feast of the Ascension announces that Jesus will faithfully accompany us no matter how far we lose our way and that by our fidelity to Christ we accept or reject the standing offer.

And because the Ascension is an Easter feast it develops even further that there is nowhere, bar evil, where God does not dwell. Because of the Resurrection and Ascension we can find God everywhere we want to: in our homes, our work, our suffering, our old age, our emotional, sexual or financial turmoil – and even in our death.

Even though the writers of the New Testament are not too clear on the details of how the Ascension happened, what we initially see in this wonderful feast is not what we get. Thanks be to God, it's so much more.

© 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

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:

God mounts his throne to shouts of joy:  
a blare of trumpets for the Lord

### Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

Go and teach all people my gospel.  
I am with you always, until the end of the world.  
Alleluia!

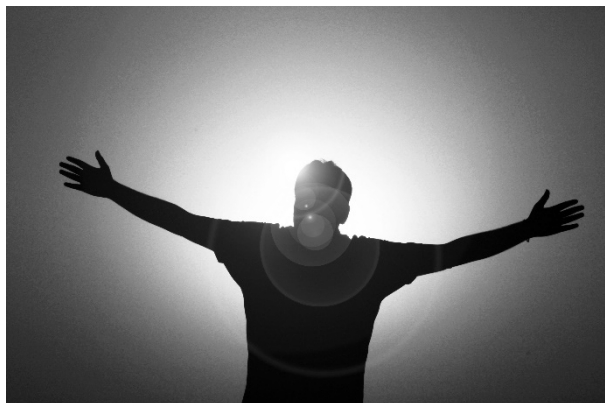
### Memorial Acclamation:

When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup,  
we proclaim your Death, O Lord,  
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 (1 June) – weather permitting!

Please stay after Mass, and join us to enjoy refreshment, conversation and company.



## In Your Charity, Please Pray For:

### Those Who Have Died:

**Those Whose Anniversary of Death Is In June:** Nora Enright, Tom Richardson, Mary Clayden, Rudd Convery, Laura Black, Daphne Oades, Bede Johnson, Bruce Ralstone, Tom Stone, Noel Smith, Meryl Ryan, Edward Kealy, William Hudson, Sydney & Zita Osmond, Helen Collins, Gisela Kirston, Joan Oliver, Fr Brian Bailey, Kenny Barry, Roy Preece, Ken Cooper, Cheryl Maytom, Margaret Mary Dooley.

**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 June:** Let us pray that each one of us might find consolation in a personal relationship with Jesus, and from his Heart, learn to have compassion on the world.

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

### Seventh Week of Easter

Monday 2 June

Tuesday 3 June

Memorial of St Charles Lwanga & companions

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Wednesday 4 June

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Thursday 5 June

Memorial of St Boniface

**NO MASS** Fr Andrew attending Safeguarding Network meeting

Friday 6 June

11am Anointing Mass @ Lara Aged Care

Saturday 7 June

5.30pm Mass @ East Gresford

Sunday 8 June

Pentecost Sunday

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

## Baptisms This Week

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