



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE

St Francis' Parish

Catholic Parish of Dungog Gresford

Incorporating **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.

21ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, C

24 AUGUST 2025

Presbytery & Parish Office

55 Brown Street, Dungog
PO Box 24, Dungog NSW 2420
Fr Andrew Doohan (*Parish Priest*)
Mrs Kerry Copus (*Parish Secretary*)

P: (02) 4992 1477
E: office@dungoggresfordcatholic.org.au
W: www.dungoggresfordcatholic.org.au

Emergency contact for Fr Andrew: 0412 405 671

Office Hours The Parish Office is staffed on Tuesdays and Fridays from 10am to 1pm.

Parish Bulletin is published each Sunday. Items for inclusion should be received at the Parish Office by 5pm on Wednesdays.

Other Contacts - Clarence Town - Val Preece (0403 251 434, 4996 4474, or email vpreece15@gmail.com)
Gresford - Faith Banister (0427 536 248)

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

Connect with us via social media Find us on Facebook, Instagram, and Threads – all with the same username (dgcatholic).

Parish School

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

P: (02) 4992 1377
E: admin@dungog.catholic.edu.au
W: www.dungog.catholic.edu.au

A Pastoral Note...

There's an old joke about liturgists which is only funny because there's a kernel of truth to it:

What's the difference between a terrorist and a liturgist? You can negotiate with a terrorist!

And yes, that is sometimes true, but only because a good liturgist is want to protect that which should be seen as fundamental to our identity as Church, i.e., our liturgical celebrations.

As many of you know I hold the role of Master of Ceremonies within the diocese, a role I have held since 2012. It is something that I enjoy (mostly) and especially when I have the opportunity to engage in delivering formation to groups on a range of liturgical subjects – often in conjunction with Sr Louise Gannon, my friend and colleague, with whom I have worked closely for many years.

Louise retired from her diocesan liturgy role at the end of 2024 and, more recently, the other person involved in liturgical matters finished her time with the diocese.

All of which means that, rather unexpectedly, I find myself engage in a range of liturgical matters – mostly planning and reviewing liturgies over which the bishop will preside – that were not coming across my desk before.

I mention this not by way of self-promotion but rather to apologise in advance for the very real possibility of not being as available as I would like to be, or for being out of the parish more often than I would prefer, or for having to spend far too much time at my desk.

The diocese is attempting to find someone to fill the vacancy left by Sr Louise but, as you might expect,

finding a suitably qualified person is not an easy task. It really is a very niche area of expertise.

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle is recognised nationally as punching well above its weight when it comes to liturgical matters, and it is hoped this reputation will eventually assist in attracting the right person to come and join us.

Until that happens – and I certainly hope it occurs sooner rather than later – the bishop has asked me to do what I can to continue fostering the liturgical life of the diocese. I look forward to the time when I can step back and once again focus primarily on being your parish priest.

Have a wonderful week... *Fr Andrew*

The Sisters of Mercy Celebrate 150 Years in the Diocese

Congratulations to the Sisters of Mercy whose founding Sisters arrived in Singleton from Ireland on 31 August 1875 to begin the long years of ministry of the Sisters in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.

A Mass, prepared by St Catherine's College, Singleton, which also marks 150 years, will be celebrated at 10am in St Patrick's Church, Singleton on Sunday 31 August and will be followed by a cuppa.

Following the cuppa, you are invited to share a Ritual of Remembrance in the Convent Chapel and Cemetery to honour the women who gave their lives in service within the Diocese.

Graced Encounters in the Community of Creation: Cultivating Hope in Action

Join presenter, Dr Ann-Maree O'Beirne rsm, for a Season of Creation Workshop on Wednesday 10 September.

With a focus on the Ignatian motif of 'finding God in all things', this workshop will explore the wisdom of living our lives through a lens of grace that generates hope for all in our community of creation. Choose from one of two sessions as we take time to discover how God is present in all of creation as experienced in our everyday lives.

For more information and to register for your preferred session, visit t.ly/UUKwR.

Winter Is With Us...

With the arrival of colder weather, the possibility of developing colds and flu increases.

A quick reminder to all parishioners that when you are unwell it may be a wise and generous move to not attend Mass, at least not without taking some precautions to ensure you don't share your cold and flu with other parishioners.

A reminder, as well, that if you are unwell, we ask you to refrain from receiving Communion from the Chalice while you remain unwell.

"Social Justice Sunday"

Next Sunday, 31 August, the Australian Church acknowledges "Social Justice Sunday".

As they do every year, the Australian Catholic Bishops have released their annual Social Justice Statement, this year entitled *Signs of Hope on the Edges: Serving Homeless People With Mental Ill-Health*.

The full statement can be found on the parish website on the 'Resources' page, along with a prayer card for this year's intention.

Australian Catholic Youth Festival

The Australian Catholic Youth Festival (ACYF), a national gathering of Catholic youth from Year 10 to 25 years old, will be held in Melbourne from 20 November to 3 December this year.

Expressions of interest have now opened for 100 young people from across the diocese to join Bishop Michael this year.

ACYF provides young people an opportunity to come together and connect whilst deepening their faith and relationship with Jesus. It's *not* a conference; it's a Catholic festival.

For more information and to register, please visit the diocesan website via the link t.ly/GbwXC.

Living the Gospel

Consequences

To be Christian is more than a name; more than a title. If we put our hand up and claim the title of Christian, then there are consequences that flow from that. Those who are disillusioned by religion frequently name hypocrisy as the major reason for their disillusionment. Sometimes, that's an easy out. We can't all live like Jesus all of the time. However, we are called to take Jesus as our model of the Christian life and to use his example as a guiding beacon. To call ourselves Christian is to try to be Christ-like in all our actions.

Homily by Richard Leonard

Jesus and Satan have an argument as to who is the better computer programmer. This goes on for a few hours until they agree to hold a contest with God as the judge.

They set themselves before their computers and begin. They type furiously for several hours, lines of code streaming up and down the screen.

Seconds before the end of the competition, a bolt of lightning strikes, taking out the electricity. Moments later, the power is restored, and God announces that the contest is over. He asks Satan to show what he has come up with.

Satan is visibly upset, and cries, 'I have nothing! I lost it all when the power went out.'

'Very well, then,' says God, 'let us see if Jesus fared any better.'

Jesus enters a command, and the screen comes to life in vivid display, the voices of an angelic choir pour forth from the speakers.

Satan is astonished. He stutters, 'But how? I lost everything, yet Jesus' program is intact! How did he do it?'

God looks up over his glasses and chuckles, 'Ah you see, Jesus saves.'

Salvation has, rightly, always been the big issue. Who was going to make it, how it was going to happen and when would Christ return in glory have captured the imagination of each generation of believers.

The roots of this thinking can be found in today's Gospel. The earliest Christians, especially the Gentiles, saw that the Jews had been given every opportunity for salvation. They were the Chosen people. They had the Law and the Prophets. They were looking for the Messiah. Jesus, however, did not come as they expected or act as they hoped, so they rejected him and his followers. Within a generation after Jesus' death the Jews were persecuting the Christians and expelling them from the synagogues. The Christians took comfort from saying that in the salvation race the Jews might have started as the favourites, but they had missed the start and were now coming last.

This way of thinking had a strong effect on the Church. While we have always believed in the mercy and love of God, at different times we have been hostile to other religions, other denominations and the secular world. We have often needed to express this in absolute terms about who was going to be saved and, more importantly, who was not!

The Second Vatican Council, however, reflected on the Church's experience of working side by side

with religious people and secular humanists throughout the world who were as committed as we are to justice, love and freedom. In the 'Declaration on the relationship of the Church to non-Christian religions', the bishops thought more generously about how God has a relationship with all people who in turn relate to God, even if they do not name it in the same way we are able to. The Council did not resile from believing that Jesus is the way to the Father, but they also affirmed that God can work in an infinite number of ways to assist people to salvation. It is Church teaching now that our relationship to all people who share the best of our values must be characterised by acceptance, collaboration, dialogue and charity.

This does not make salvation any less important. It just clarifies for us that it is God, not us, who does the saving and the judging. Christian salvation marks us out as people who know who we are following, where we are going, how we are getting there and why this world, and the next, matters to us. Salvation gives our lives meaning, direction and purpose.

The way we live out this salvation should be irresistible to others. As the folk hymn sings, 'They will know we are Christians by our love, by our love. Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our 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.



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

Twenty First Week in Ordinary Time

Monday 25 August

Tuesday 26 August

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Wednesday 27 August

Memorial of St Monica

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Thursday 28 August

Memorial of St Augustine

9.30am Mass @ East Gresford

Friday 29 August

Memorial of the Passion of St John the Baptist

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

Saturday 30 August

5.30pm Mass @ East Gresford

Sunday 31 August

Twenty Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

Electronic Banking Details

BSB: 066 739

A/c Name: Catholic Development Fund

A/c No: 100 005 170

Reference: Your Surname or other reference

In Your Charity, Please Pray For:

Those Who Have Died:

Those Whose Anniversary of Death Is In August:

Luxton Walker, Connie Gibson, Gladys Garner, Selena Smith, Mary Sonter, Margaret Muddle, Fay Farrow, Barbara King, Reg West, Harrison Walters, Jack Jordan, Jean Taylor, Jim Riches, Ron Jones, Margaret Kelly, Joan McMullen, Lou Dillon, Terry Shiel, John Rose, Norma Preece, Laurie Williams, Denis Cavanough, Margaret French, Jean Kenney, Shirley Wade, Allen Kearns, Tony Townsend, Molly Turner.

Those Who Are Sick: Maryann Smith, Daphne Bond, Leonie Young, Lisa Reid, 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, Jean Robertson, Jessica Byron, Gwen Trappel, Eileen Chalenor, Joyce Byron.

Papal Prayer Intention for August: Let us pray that societies where coexistence seems more difficult might not succumb to the temptation of confrontation for ethnic, political, religious or ideological reasons.

Today's Liturgy:

Today's Scripture Readings:

First: Isaiah 66:18-21

Second: Hebrews 12:5-7, 11-13

Gospel: Luke 13:22-30

Responsorial Psalm:

Go out to all the world and tell the Good News.

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

I am the way, the truth, and the life, says the Lord; no one comes to the Father, except through me. Alleluia!

Memorial Acclamation:

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



Safeguarding in our Parishes means ...

The safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is important. St Francis of Assisi Parish is committed to fostering communities of safety and care.

We acknowledge our legal, moral, and spiritual responsibilities to care for and uphold the dignity and rights of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

St Francis of Assisi Parish acknowledges 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.