



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.

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER, YEAR A

19 APRIL 2026

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

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

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

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

Safeguarding Promotion: For all safeguarding concerns within the parish, please contact Fr Andrew in the first instance, or the Office of Safeguarding (www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au).

Social Media Find us on Facebook, Instagram, and Threads – all with the username [dgcatholic](#).

A Pastoral Note...

At the risk of becoming 'political', it's been an interesting exercise to follow the various twists and turns that have emerged since the US President accused Pope Leo of being 'weak' and a 'disaster'.

The loaded commentary by the President was both unnecessary and unkind, showing more of the character of the speaker than the one spoken about. It was also typical of the *modus operandi* of the President.

Such behaviour has sparked a rhetorical 'pile on' from those who could generously be described as the President's closest allies.

All of this has revealed a profound and perhaps dangerous misunderstanding of what Pope Leo is attempting to do and what the legitimate role of the Holy Father is – regardless of who occupies the Chair of Peter.

That Pope Leo's efforts have been defended by an

incredible broad coalition of individuals around the world, including those who might ordinarily be expected to support the US President, has been gratifying to see.

In calling for more peace in the world, Pope Leo is not suggesting that tyrants should be left to do whatever they want, nor is he intimating that there might be times when war must be avoided at all costs.

What Pope Leo is saying, however, is that war and violence is not, must not be, the first option that we embrace. It must be, can only ever be, the option of last resort when everything else has been tried and failed. There might be times when war is the only option (the 'just war doctrine') – but only under very restricted circumstances.

Such an approach does not make us 'weak' or 'soft'. Rather, it is a brave and bold option.

Have a blessed week...

Fr Andrew

ANZAC Day 2026

Next Saturday, Australia and New Zealand will observe our national day of remembrance, as we remember those who have served our nation in war and peace.

With ANZAC Day falling on the weekend in 2026 (and again in 2027), it will not be possible for Mass to be celebrated in the parish this year. Parishioners are strongly encouraged to participate in the various civic acts of remembrance in our communities.

Lest we forget!

Sacraments of Initiation in 2026

Confirmation in 2026 will be celebrated on Tuesday 15 September, at 6.30pm. Bishop Michael will be coming to our parish this year.

It should also be noted that following a request from Bishop Michael, future celebrations will take place every second year, i.e., 2028, 2030, etc.

Information and details about the process for celebrating Confirmation and first Communion this year can be found on the parish website by going to t.ly/1X-1b. Please pass this information to anyone who may be interested.

For any enquiries, please contact Fr Andrew.

Parish Pilgrimage to Ireland

The Parish pilgrimage to Ireland will depart Sydney on Monday 21 September and returns into Sydney on Friday 9 October, although individuals may wish to extend their time in Ireland and surrounds as part of their plans.

The itinerary document, which can be found on the 'Resources' page of the parish website, contains the details of the places the pilgrimage will visit. The document also contains a link to the company, Harvest Journeys, that has made the arrangements if you would like to make a booking, seek further information, or discuss options.

If you're interested in participating in the journey, please make your booking and pay your deposit (\$800) as soon as you can.

International Eucharistic Congress 2028

In 2028, Australia will host a landmark moment as Sydney hosts the International Eucharistic Congress (Eucharist28).

This is more than a single event. It marks the beginning of a journey of renewal, transformation and mission, centred on an encounter with Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.

A moment to believe. The journey has begun. Join us at eucharist28.org.

Farewell to Liz Doyle

After 33 years of service to the Chancery and to the people of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle, Elizabeth Doyle (Liz), the Executive Assistant to Bishop Michael, is bringing her remarkable tenure to a close.

Across those decades, Liz has offered steadfast support to one Diocesan Administrator (Fr Greg Barker) and four bishops (Leo Clarke, Michael Malone, William Wright, and, most recently, Michael Kennedy). Liz has served with humility, professionalism, and an unwavering commitment to the mission of the Catholic Church.

As her final working day approaches, we look forward to recognising and giving thanks for Liz's exceptional service, and to honouring the many ways she has enriched our diocesan community.

You are warmly invited to celebrate with Liz on **Friday 1 May** with a Mass beginning at 9.30am in Sacred Heart Cathedral, Newcastle West.

Mass will be followed by a celebration in the Southern Cross Hall honouring Liz's 33 years of service, and will conclude with a morning tea.

Please RSVP by going to: <http://mn.shor.tn/lizdoyle>.

Handover of Singleton Mercy Convent

On Wednesday 22 April, the Sisters of Mercy will hand over their Singleton Convent to the care of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. The ritual will commence at 10am in the Convent on Queen St.

This is a significant event for both the Sisters and the Diocese, as a legacy of mercy and hospitality is gifted to the Diocese by the Sisters for safekeeping.

Everyone is welcome to attend.

National Mass Attendance Count Is Coming

The 2026 National Count of Attendance (Mass Count) will take place over the first four weekends of May. This information is important to helping to accurately plan for the future, at national, diocesan, and parish levels.

The method used for the count enables reporting of actual numbers attending on any particular weekend, at each Mass, and the calculation of the total number likely to be in attendance on a typical weekend, after taking into special events like Confirmations.

Your assistance in undertaking the count over the four weeks is appreciated, and there may be a need to insert a small delay into the Masses to enable accurate reporting.

This might also be the opportunity to encourage people to 'come back and be counted' ... just saying.

The Concluding Rites – Part 5

At the end of Part 4, we had looked at the simple version of the blessing that takes place at the end of Mass. This is what most people will experience on most weekends; it is short, sharp, and to the point.

As we noted in Part 4, however, there are times when the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (GIRM) indicates that the simpler form is “expanded by the Prayer over the People or another more solemn formula” (n.90).

The first of these possible expansions – the Prayer over the People – involves inserting two additional elements: an instruction, and an invocation.

The instruction is a simple one. The Deacon (or the Presider if there is no Deacon) simply asks the Assembly to “Bow down for the blessing”. This text is included in the *Roman Missal* at the beginning of the section that details these expanded forms of the blessing.

After the instruction is given, the Presider extends his hands over all of the Assembly and use one of the many texts available for use when this option is utilised.

In addition to the options found on pages 722-726 of *The Roman Missal*, there are also some liturgical feasts and seasons that have particular texts associated with them for either compulsory or optional use.

The Season of Lent is a prime example of this, where a Prayer over the People is available for each day of Lent, Sundays and weekdays. Such a prayer is mandated on the Sundays of Lent, while they are optional on weekdays. Each of the prayers concludes with “Through Christ our Lord”, to which the Assembly responds with the customary “Amen”.

The Presider concludes this slightly expanded form of the Greeting and Blessing with a slightly expanded form of the blessing itself:

And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you forever.

While saying this, the Presider makes the sign of the cross over the Assembly in the usual way, with the Assembly also responding in the usual way (see Part 4 for more on this).

And that is the first form of the expanded Greeting and Blessing that is sometimes encountered. It is a beautiful and joyous means of enhancing this part of the Concluding Rites, and is really only trumped by the Solemn Blessing.

But that exploration can wait until Part 6.

To be continued...

LIVING THE GOSPEL

Living the journey

The story of the road to Emmaus is a perfect model for our Christian life. It reminds us first of all that none of us walk the journey alone. Even when we don't recognise his presence, Jesus joins us in the everyday realities of life. The breaking open and interpretation of scripture is essential to making sense of our life experiences and through the celebration of Eucharist and table fellowship we are nourished to not only continue the journey but to share the good news with others. Where do you find yourself in the events of this story?

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Spirituality and the Significance of Country

The *Listen to the Heart: Moving Forward* Team will host Fr Darryl Mackie and Aunty Wanda Smith as they discuss and answer questions about the connection to Country of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and its relationship with the Christian faith.

The event will take place on **Saturday 2 May 2026** in the Therry Centre, cnr New England Hwy and King St, East Maitland from 8.30am – 12.30pm.

Morning Tea will be provided, but please bring your own lunch.

Donations towards the hosting of the event would be welcome on the day.

If you would like to attend, please RSVP via t.ly/3cEV- by Wednesday 29 April.

Safeguarding in our Parishes means ...

St Francis of Assis Parish holds 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 parish has zero tolerance for all forms of abuse and is committed to safeguarding all who interact with the parish through our activities, ministries and services, especially children and adults at risk.

Today's Liturgy

Scripture Readings:

First: Acts 2:14, 22-33
Second: 1 Peter 1:17-21
Gospel: Luke 24:13-35

Responsorial Psalm:

Lord, you will show us the path of life.

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!
Lord Jesus, make your word plain to us:
make our hearts burn with love when you speak.
Alleluia!

Memorial Acclamation:

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

Morning Tea at Dungog

The next morning tea in Dungog will take place TODAY (19 April) in the Parish Hall after the 9.30am Mass. Please join us for good company, good food, and good conversation.



St Francis of Assis Parish acknowledges the people of the Worrimi 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.

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

Third Week of Easter, Year A

Monday 20 April

Tuesday 21 April

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Wednesday 22 April

NO MASS Fr Andrew on Master of Ceremonies duty in Singleton.

Thursday 23 April

9.30am Mass @ East Gresford

Friday 24 April

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Saturday 25 April

ANZAC Day

5.30pm Mass @ East Gresford

Sunday 26 April

Fourth Sunday of Easter

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

Alleluia!!

In Your Charity, Please Pray For:

Those Who Have Died:

Those Whose Anniversary of Death Is In April: Bede Gehrig, Ruth Jones, Lenore McDermott, Paula Murphy, Robert Holdom, Dorothy Bowtell, Rex Garland, Bruno Rocco, Herbert John Preece, Allie Allen, Peter Allen, Tom O'Driscoll, Paddy Kilpinen, Bill Tyne, Neil Faber, Lyn Barry, Michael Flanagan, Paul Cooper.

Those Who Are Sick and Unwell: Warren Wade, Kevin Ward, Keith Edwards, Susan Barlow, Jean Robertson, Jessica Byron, Gwen Trappel, Eileen Chalenor, Kay Hackney, Graham McCarthy, Lyn Heaney, Paul Hardy, Joy Cavanough, Monique Jones, Joshua Kealy, John Newton.

Papal Prayer Intention for April: "Let us pray for priests going through moments of crisis in their vocation, that they may find the accompaniment they need and that communities may support them with understanding and prayer."

Electronic Banking Details

BSB: 066 739
A/c Name: Catholic Development Fund
A/c No: 100 005 170
Reference: Your Surname or other reference