



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.

**SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (A)**

**10 MAY 2026**

### Presbytery & Parish Office

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

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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** 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](http://www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au)).

**Social Media** Find us on Facebook, Instagram, and Threads – all with the username dgatholic.

### A Pastoral Note...

Coming to this Sunday, the Sixth Sunday of Easter, means that we are rapidly approaching the end of our celebration of the Easter Season for 2026.

Next week sees the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord, while the following week will see us mark the Solemnity of Pentecost Sunday – the last day of the Easter Season.

And yet... Although we will soon farewell the Easter Season, we can never say good-bye to the reality of Easter. We are truly an Easter people because the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus is at the very centre of our identity as disciples of Jesus.

Indeed, every Sunday, that day when the Church gathers to celebrate the Day of the Lord, we keep a 'little Easter', recalling in word and sacrament the Paschal Mystery which marks us out of those who bear the name of Jesus.

And that is as it should be in my humble estimation since without the Death and Resurrection of Jesus, we would have no basis for our faith and hope, or a reason to gather on Sunday, or the impetus to do as Jesus did, see as Jesus saw, or live as Jesus lived. It would simply be impossible.

### Parish School

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

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So as we prepare to bring our Easter Season to a close and thus move into Ordinary Time, let's not lose sight of the reality that we are an Easter people, formed into the Body of Christ because of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus, and thrust out into the world to share the reality of Easter with all we come into contact with.

As previously mentioned in the Parish Bulletin, I will be taking some of my annual leave commencing tomorrow (Monday 11 May). I will return in time for the Masses on the weekend of 23/24 May, the Solemnity of Pentecost Sunday.

Although I have no plans for anything extravagant during my leave, and will be spending much of the time to simply rest 'at home', I will be unavailable in all but most extreme cases.

I am grateful for the opportunity to take some time for recreation, and I look forward to being back among you in a couple of weeks. My thanks to Fr Dennis Rochford msc for this availability to travel to the Parish for next weekend's Parish Masses.

Have a blessed week...and see you when I get back from leave.

Fr Andrew

### **Palliative Care Remembrance Church Service**

**UPDATE:** The annual Dungog Palliative Care Remembrance Church Service will take place on Sunday 17 May in the **Anglican** Church, Dowling Street, Dungog, and will commence at **6.30pm**.

All welcome.

### **Diocesan Cursillo 3-Day Course**

Do you wonder how to be more fully alive? If so, you may like to consider attending our Cursillo 3-day course.

The 2026 Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle Cursillo course will be held from 11-14 June at the Cataline Conference Centre, Rathmines, with the theme "Joy of the Lord is my strength".

To learn more about Cursillo and the 3-day course, visit [t.ly/tTgb0](https://t.ly/tTgb0).

## **GOSPEL FOCUS**

### **Paraclete**

*The Greek word, paraklētos, is translated into a number of different terms in English translations of the gospel. Its technical use was for a lawyer or attorney. However, its use in scripture is like the broader meaning of advocate that we use today: someone who stands up for another; someone who speaks up for another; someone who intercedes on behalf of another. An advocate is one who lends strength and support to someone who is disempowered. That is exactly what Jesus did for many people during his ministry and it is also what the Holy Spirit is sent to do.*

### **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.

### **Ordination of a Deacon**

Bishop Michael will ordain Christopher Voigt to the Diaconate on Saturday, 23 May in Sacred Heart Cathedral, with the Mass beginning at 10am.

Christopher will be ordained as a Permanent Deacon and will continue to work in and around the Maitland Parishes where he lives with his family.

All parishioners from across the Diocese are warmly invited and most welcome to be present to witness and celebrate the occasion.

### **Diocesan 'Come and See' Retreat Day**

The Diocese is holding a vocations retreat day on Saturday 16 May at the Hunter Wetlands Centre in Shortland, from 9am to 3.30pm.

Explore God's call on your life through Scripture, gain practical discernment tools from a nationally recognised presenter, pray and reflect in a peaceful natural setting, and connect with speakers from a range of vocational backgrounds.

More details can be found on the flyer on the church bulletin boards. If you or someone you know is interested in attending this retreat, please RSVP to [mn.short.tn/comeandseeday](https://mn.short.tn/comeandseeday).

### **ALIVE Catholic Youth Launch**

Witness how the Holy Spirit is moving in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle as we launch ALIVE – a dynamic and exciting event that will showcase a new diocesan identity for young people that seeks to draw them into a personal relationship with Christ they feel confident to share with others.

Music will be led by a nationally acclaimed worship team and a number of exciting plans will be announced alongside some good news stories of where ALIVE is already taking shape in parishes and schools.

To secure your free seat, visit [t.ly/hYdx1](https://t.ly/hYdx1)

# *Alleluia!!*

### **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.

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-lb](https://t.ly/1X-lb). Please pass this information to anyone who may be interested.

For any enquiries, please contact Fr Andrew.

## The Concluding Rites – Part 8

At the end of Part 7 the Assembly who had come together to worship God and to be nourished by Word and Sacrament have been dismissed, sent out, to go back to doing good works in the name of God.

It might surprise a few people then that the last element mentioned in the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM)* is

the kissing of the altar by the [Presider] and the Deacon, followed by a profound bow to the altar by the [Presider], the Deacon, and the other ministers. (n.90d)

Which might seem to leave the various ministers standing in front of the altar, but if you read on in the *GIRM* – to n.169 – then we find out that after doing all of the above, the Presider “withdraws with them”. This instruction is repeated in the *Order of Mass* n.145.

The language used is interesting. Unlike at the beginning of Mass, when the Presider enters the gathering together with the other ministers, accompanied by some form of music, at the end he and they ‘withdraw’. There is no mention of musical accompaniment, and the language implies a simpler action.

Even the *Ceremonial of Bishops*, a ritual book that contains the more elaborate liturgical directions for liturgies presided over by a bishop, maintains the distinction between what happens at the beginning of Mass and what happens at the end of Mass (after the dismissal).

What do we make of this?

In most parishes in Australia – and other places to be sure – the ‘withdrawal’ of the liturgical ministers has taken on a level of solemnity that perhaps was never meant to be present in the post-conciliar liturgy.

There is music, often grand in order to ‘send people off well’, and the procession tends to be as solemn as the entrance procession. Yet nothing of all of that is mentioned in the instructions for how Mass is to be celebrated.

The requirement is, simply, to withdraw.

I am not suggesting, however, that we should do anything to change the current practice. I have to confess to liking nothing more than a stirring hymn to which to leave a church. And this is particularly the case during those more solemn moments in the life of the Church – such as the Annual Chrism Mass – where liturgical solemnity has been part of the entire experience.

I am saying, though, that we need to recognise that such a practice is, strictly speaking, not

required by the liturgical document that outlines how we celebrate the most important celebration in the Church’s life, and from which other celebrations take a lead.

It might also mean that, occasionally at least, a simple withdrawal should be considered as an option for the end of Mass. Those times of the liturgical year – the Seasons of Lent and Advent spring to mind – which lend themselves to a pared back liturgical experience might be considered as being appropriate for such a practice.

Whatever the case, at the end of the dismissal, the Presider and his liturgical ministers, ‘withdraw’ in an appropriate manner, while the gathered Assembly begins to disperse back to doing good works.

And that brings us to the end of other exploration of the Concluding Rites of Mass. Next week, in Part 9, we will briefly summarise our exploration before this series comes to an end.

*To be continued...*



### SRE Teacher at Dungog High School

There is an opening for a paid SRE Teacher to work in Dungog High School for a half day per week.

More information about the role – and application – can be made by clicking on [t.ly/Qqogj](https://t.ly/Qqogj).

### 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](https://eucharist28.org).

## Today's Liturgy

### Scripture Readings:

First: Acts 8:5-8, 14-17  
Second: 1 Peter 3:15-18  
Gospel: John 14:15-21

### Responsorial Psalm:

Let all the earth cry to God with joy.

### 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.

## Morning Tea at Dungog

The next morning tea in Dungog will take place next Sunday (17 May) in the Parish Hall after the 9.30am Mass.

Please bring a plate to share, and join us for good company, good food, and good conversation.

## National Mass Attendance Count Continues

The 2026 National Mass Count continues this week, with a focus on the total number of persons attending each of the parish Masses.

Next week, in addition to the total number present, we will also count by gender.

## 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.

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...)

Sixth Week of Easter, Year A

**NB:** There are no weekday Masses this week while Fr Andrew is on leave.

Monday 11 May

Tuesday 12 May

Wednesday 13 May

Thursday 14 May

*Feast of St Matthias*

10.30am Funeral for Theresa Cowley @ East Gresford

Friday 15 May

Saturday 16 May

5.30pm Mass @ East Gresford

Sunday 17 May

*Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord*

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

## In Your Charity, Please Pray For:

**Those Who Have Died:** Margaret Clune, Theresa Cowley.

**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 and Unwell:** Warren Wade, Kevin Ward, Keith Edwards, Susan Barlow, Jean Robertson, Jessica Byron, Gwen Trappel, Eileen Chalenor, Kay Hackney, Graham McCarthy, Paul Hardy, Joy Cavanough, Monique Jones, John Newton, Kristine Desai.

**Papal Prayer Intention for May:** "Let us pray that everyone, from large producers to small consumers, be committed to avoid wasting food, and to ensure that everyone has access to quality food."

## Electronic Banking Details

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