



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.

**13TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A)**

**28 JUNE 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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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** 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...

This Sunday sees us approaching the middle of the year that is 2026. For me at least, it seems hard to believe, but the calendar doesn't deceive.

Arriving at the midpoint of 2026 means that we can rightly celebrate the first year of the existence of our parish, St Francis of Assisi Parish, Dungog Gresford, and all that has taken place over the last twelve months. There are a few remaining administrative tasks associated with that development, but I knew some of those would take a little longer.

Being half-way done with 2026 also means that we still have more than six months left in the year to be about the task of being – or becoming – missionary disciples, an undertaking that is available not just because of our new identity as a parish community but flows primarily from our baptism into the life and death of Jesus Christ.

How might we live out our call to be missionary disciples? What might it look like if our parish was to become one of missionary disciples? Would our future be different?

All of these are very interesting questions, and there will be a chance to discuss them at our upcoming

### 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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Parish Assembly, but they're not just questions for such an event.

Such questions are meant, I humbly suggest, to be the kind of questions that we ask ourselves each and every day as we seek to live out Jesus' call to be his disciples.

The answers will vary with who is asking them and when they are asking them – and at times there may well be no answer immediately available. Yet the option of *not* asking those questions – and many others – is simply foreign to who we are called to be.

Authentic discipleship requires us, I would suggest, to ask the questions, seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in finding answers, and then trusting that we will have the courage to put the answers into effect. It can be frightening undertaking to do so, but hope, as they say, is not deceptive.

We might not know what the outcomes will be when we do embrace the answers, but I have a very strong suspicion that doing nothing is simply *not* an option if we wish to be worthy of the name 'Christian' by which we are to be known.

Have a blessed week...

Fr Andrew

### Welcome Back Fr Dennis!

We welcome Fr Dennis Rochford msc back to the Parish this weekend as he celebrates the Parish Masses at Clarence Town and Dungog on Sunday.

Fr Andrew will be travelling to Sydney on Sunday as part of his responsibilities as State Chaplain for St John NSW as that organisation marks its annual feast day.

We are grateful to Fr Dennis for allowing Fr Andrew to travel, and we look forward to him visiting again later in the year when Fr Andrew is on pilgrimage in Ireland.

### Share Your Gifts and Make An Impact

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle is once again inviting parishioners to continue journeying toward strengthening the newly established Councils and Advisory Boards, as the diocese seeks to fill some vacancies following the initial Expression of Interest process last year.

This next phase is an opportunity to broaden the participation of diocesan members, and to ensure the diocesan governance structures reflect the diversity and rich gifts found in the diocesan community.

Opportunities particularly exist for those with backgrounds and experience in Governance, Finance, and Banking. New members are also sort for the Community and Wellbeing, Catholic Community Fund, and Education Boards.

The various Councils and Boards work in a synodal way marked by collaboration, respectful listening, and thoughtful conversation. They play an important role in shaping the future of our Diocese.

People from across the Diocese who feel called to submit an expression of interest are invited to go to the diocesan website. For more information and to lodge your EOI, visit [t.ly/BKIAE](https://t.ly/BKIAE)

### Parish Assembly

As mentioned way back in January, our parish will hold a Parish Assembly in July to discuss and decide on a number of important issues that are facing us, and to discern our future direction and activities together.

The 2026 Parish Assembly will take place in the Dungog Parish Hall on **Saturday 25 July 2026** beginning with Mass at 9am.

Papers for the Assembly are being prepared and will start to appear on the 'Resources' page of the Parish Website, and will be finalised no later than the weekend of 4th and 5th July.

If anyone has a matter they would like added to the Agenda, please contact Fr Andrew.

### Review of the 'Sick and Unwell' List

As we must do periodically, it's time for a review of the names included in the 'Sick and Unwell' list that appears in the bulletin each week.

Over the next few weeks, it would be appreciated if all those who asked for names to be included on the list could confirm whether the name should remain there. This is a request for a *positive* response, i.e., if the inclusion isn't confirmed as staying, the name will be removed.

Please confirm the inclusion by contacting the Parish Office no later than **30 June 2026**.



### Young Adult Retreat 2026: To Be Human

The Young Adult Retreat returns this year, inviting young adults aged 18 to 35 to explore what it means *To Be Human* and fully alive in this life and for eternity.

The retreat will take place from Friday 17 July until Sunday 19 July at Camp Elim, Forster, and will feature speakers from across NSW and Australia, a dynamic and engaging program, praise and worship, and the celebration of the sacraments.

To register, visit [ALIVEYA26.eventbrite.com.au](https://ALIVEYA26.eventbrite.com.au).

### SRE Gathering with Bishop Michael

A special gathering for all SRE Teachers – and those considering joining this ministry – will take place at St Stephen's Church, Tea Gardens on Friday 17 July from 9.30am to 1pm.

This is an opportunity to spend a day with Bishop Michael and fellow volunteers to celebrate, reflect, and grow in the shared mission of SRE.

Come listen, learn, and be inspired by the experience and dedication of others who serve with faith and love.

To register, visit [t.ly/NKRCCO](https://t.ly/NKRCCO)

## **Homily** by Richard Leonard

For all the great things the Church of yesteryear achieved, it also did some terrible things. One of the worst demands it made was that a Catholic who married a person who was not a Catholic did so at a side altar, oratory or in the sacristy of the Church. How humiliating this directive was. For how long were we going to punish the Protestant Reformers and a young Catholic woman or man who fell in love with someone from these denominations? In these ecumenical days, it's hard for us to understand these actions.

Today, especially at weddings, I hear older Catholics talk about this experience more than anything else. It's often given as the reason why the person or their family stopped practising their Catholic faith.

Recently an older wedding guest told me that her wedding day at the side altar was the last day she came to the Church of her own free will. She never had her children baptised and her painful experience was still palpable forty years on as she compared and contrasted her wedding day with the Catholic marriage ceremony of a couple in a similar religious circumstance to her own which we had just celebrated. All I can do in such circumstances is apologise for the hurt our shortsightedness caused and be full of admiration for those who were subjected to similar treatment but have remained constant to our Catholic community.

These days inter-denominational marriages are rarely the reasons over which a family will divide. But we know that other religious issues can still break up a family. It's always a tragedy when this happens. For example, maybe you've had a son, daughter or a grandchild join a religious sect or cult. It's heartbreaking stuff for parents who wonder what their child sees in the sect and where it will all end.

The Church has sometimes let families down in this regard. Appearing to prefer dogma to the complexities of people's lives, formal liturgy to creating communities of hospitality, care and justice, the church can appear to be out of touch, especially with our young. I know that every person in authority in the Church today knows that the Catholic Church needs to listen to our young people, hear about the issues that concern them and present our faith in a way they find accessible and engaging. Very often it's not what we say about our rich faith, it's how we say it. Many people don't leave the mainstream churches because they are attracted by another group's doctrine, though some do want the world to be very black and white. Many leave for smaller groups offering a tightly knit community.

From today's Gospel we know that the same family heartbreak occurred in the early church. At this time, however, Christianity was the small sect drawing believers away from Judaism, to acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah. It ripped families apart. The early church became the new family of many followers who were disowned. They lost their life and found a new one in Christ.

There can be moments when a family's lifestyle, beliefs, behaviour or values are such that one member feels that, in conscience, or by conviction, he or she does not belong anymore.

When this happens we can listen carefully to reasons the family member gives. Maybe we have lost something essential in our life together that needs challenging and change. And maybe it's the family member who is in the wrong.

Keeping the lines of communication open, speaking the truth with calmness and love and remaining as compassionate as possible are the best Christian responses.

I can't pretend that any of this is easy, but, when I have seen families do it, the prophetic, truthful and charitable rewards Jesus offers in today's Gospel are powerfully in evidence.

© 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.

## **SRE Teacher at Dungog High School**

There is an opening for a paid SRE Teacher to work in Dungog High School for the equivalent of a half day per week. Applicants from any Christian denomination prepared to work in an ecumenical setting are encouraged to apply. For more information go to [t.ly/Qaogj](https://t.ly/Qaogj).

## **Sacraments of Initiation in 2026**

Confirmation in 2026 will be celebrated on Tuesday 15 September, at 6.30pm.

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 note that beginning in 2026, the celebration of Confirmation will take place every second year. For any enquiries, please contact Fr Andrew.

## Today's Liturgy

### Scripture Readings:

First: 2 Kings 4:8-11, 14-16  
Second: Romans 6:3-4, 8-11  
Gospel: Matthew 10:37-42

### Responsorial Psalm:

For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

### Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy people. Praise God who called you out of darkness.

Alleluia!

### Memorial Acclamation:

When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup,  
we proclaim your Death, O Lord,  
until you come again.

## In Your Charity, Please Pray For:

**Those Who Have Died:** Peter Richardson, Glen Hicks.

**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, Christine Elliott, John Taylor.

**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 June:** "Let us pray that sports be an instrument of peace, encounter, and dialogue among cultures and nations, and that they promote values such as respect, solidarity, and personal growth."

## Safeguarding in our Parish 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.

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

13th Week in Ordinary Time, Year A

Monday 29 June

Solemnity of Sts Peter and Paul

Tuesday 30 June

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

11.30am Funeral Liturgy for the Late Glen Hicks @ Dungog

Wednesday 1 July

Anniversary of the canonical erection of St Francis of Assisi Parish, Dungog Gresford

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Thursday 2 July

9.30am Mass @ East Gresford

Friday 3 July

Feast of St Thomas

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

11am Anointing Mass @ Lara Aged Care

Saturday 4 July

5.30pm Mass @ East Gresford

Sunday 5 July

14th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

## Morning Tea at Clarence Town

Morning tea at Clarence Town will take place after the 8am Mass next Sunday (5 July) under the pergola.

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

## Service NSW Mobile Service Centre Returning

The Service NSW Mobile Service Centre will once again be coming to Clarence Town on Tuesday 30 June 2026, between 12.30pm and 3.30pm.

The Centre will be found at 48 Grey Street as usual.

St Francis of Assis Parish acknowledges the people of the Worimi and Wonnarua nations, on whose traditional lands we gather, live, and work. We pay our respects to their Elders – past, present, and emerging.

We acknowledge their cultural heritage and beliefs, and commit ourselves to working together for reconciliation and justice.

## Electronic Banking Details

BSB: 066 739

A/c Name: Catholic Development Fund

A/c No: 100 005 170

Reference: Your Surname or other reference