



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.

15TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A)

12 JULY 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).

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

A Pastoral Note...

This coming week marks four years since I arrived in what was then the twinned parishes of Dungog and Gresford. It seems like only yesterday that was moving boxes and furniture into the presbytery and coming to grips with the 'interesting' state of the roads in the Dungog Shire.

There has been much water under the bridge since then, however, and the changes – in the parish and myself – have been profound...and in my case, very welcome!

The passage of time is one of the greatest agents of change for all of us, both individually and as a body. Wishing for things to stay the same "as they always have been" is inviting disappointment, since the only constant thing most of us will ever encounter in life is the reality of change.

Change for the sake of change is not always a healthy development and, regretfully, can become a burden rather than an advantage.

Change that is deliberate and considered, on the other hand, is necessary for growth and development, again both for individuals and for groups such as parish communities.

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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I mention this in light of the change we have seen as a parish community since the decision was made to combine two parishes and embark on a journey as one.

Part of that journey together is an openness to change for the sake of progressing the mission of the Church – and therefore of the parish – within our broader community. That change, which honours the past, is a necessary part of becoming more and more who we are supposed to be in this time and this place.

In light of that, I invite all parishioners to be part of the upcoming Parish Assembly (see inside) and discerning together how we are called to change so we can be best prepared to take our proper place in the community, and communities, in which we live and minister.

Prayerful support over the coming weeks for the Parish Assembly would also be most welcome, not only to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit for our deliberations, but also for a spirit of openness to where God might be calling us.

Have a blessed week...

Fr Andrew

Share Your Gifts and Make An Impact

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle is once again inviting parishioners to continue journeying toward a strengthened 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

Free To A Good Home

Fr Andrew has recently changed his technology set-up and now has three 27" computer monitors, older but still in good working order, that are surplus to need.

If anyone is looking for a large monitor to use with a laptop, as a spare, or any other use for that matter, these monitors are available free, on a first come first served basis, to anyone who might like them.

If you are interested in these items, please speak directly to Fr Andrew for more information.

Eucharistic Congress 2028 – July Update

The International Eucharistic Congress ('Eucharist28') is coming to Sydney in 2028!

Eucharist28's theme, '*This is My Body, Given For You*', invites us to reflect on Christ's words as he instituted the Eucharistic Sacrifice. At each Mass, the priest repeats Jesus' words from the Last Supper, and the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ. As we receive the Eucharist, we are called to carry his presence into our homes, workplaces, schools, parishes and communities. We're invited to allow Christ's presence to transform us as we share in the breaking of the bread. The journey begins now.

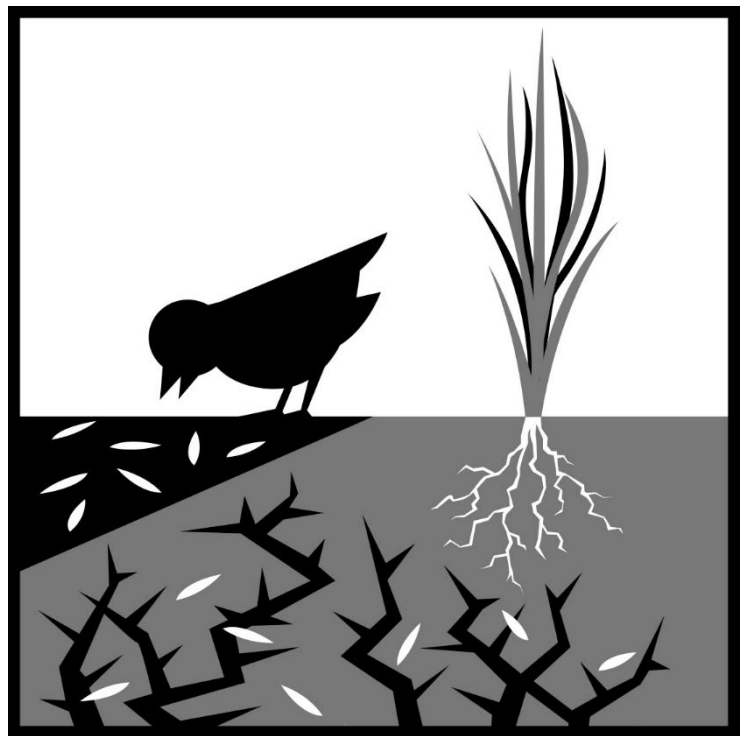
For more information, visit www.eucharist28.org.

Continuing the Synodal Journey

The Synod on Synodality has been one of the most significant events in the life of the Catholic Church since Vatican II. For the first time, lay women and men joined bishops in the Synod Assembly with equal voting rights. Shortly afterwards, Pope Francis adopted the Final Document as part of the ordinary teaching of the Church.

What does this mean for us and for the future of our Diocese? Join us as we explore the key themes of the Final Document, the implementation phase now underway, and opportunities to become involved in local Synodal Teams. Please bring a plate to share and register your attendance.

The most easily accessible gathering for Dungog Gresford parishioners is at Raymond Terrace on Thursday 30 July beginning at 6pm. To register your attendance for this gathering, visit t.ly/6cQy.



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 now available on the 'Resources' page of the Parish Website for your information.

Printed copies of the Papers are available via a request to the Parish Office for those who cannot access the website.

Homily by Richard Leonard

A newcomer to a city known for its wind and rain arrives on a rainy day. She gets up the next day and it's raining. It also rains the day after that, and the day after that. She goes out to lunch and sees a young child and, out of despair, asks, 'Hey, kid, does it ever stop raining around here?' To which the child replies, 'How should I know? I'm only six.'

With the three readings we have just heard, we could easily celebrate Environment Sunday today. Rain, snow, seeds, sowers, fertile soil and a labouring creation giving birth to the fruits of the Spirit, are all rich ground upon which we can reflect on the importance of our earth's ecology.

In recent years the Church has regularly reminded us that the issue of caring for the environment is an important part of our Christian commitment for justice. We have been reminded that while the earth has been entrusted to us as stewards, to be preserved, it is also given into our hands to be developed in such a way that there will be a productive earth for future generations to inherit.

If this means we must limit our consumption, change our priorities in regard to energy and trade and show the third world the way in developing eco-friendly industries, then all the better for us. Most of us know that we cannot keep going as we are, with ever increasing unsustainable demands on our planet. There is no point any of us crying over the demise of our environment in the future, if we are doing nothing to help it now.

Every small thing we do from being conscious of the issues, to recycling and using our cars less, is not unimportant. Some of us are in positions to do a lot more than these things as well and we should take our Christian responsibilities in this regard very seriously.

One creative reading of today's Gospel is that it parallels how we can respond to the news of the degradation of the environment.

For some of us the facts and figures about the planet's ecosystem fall on rocky ground. We are not receptive to hearing anything that might demand a change in our lifestyle or a lessening of our comfort.

For others of us, recent debates fall among the thorns. Competing with other issues for our attention and action, the plight of the earth is not able to take root in our consciousness or sympathies. We think it can all wait for another generation who will have the ability to fix the problems then.

For some of us, however, recent surveys and our own sense of environmental changes means that what experts are saying falls on fertile soil. We want

to do whatever we can to see that the earth continues to bear fruit for as many generations as God intends.

The Old and New Testaments are filled with the importance of our relationships to the earth. In the book of Genesis humanity is told to care for and subdue the earth, not wreck it. We cannot be irresponsible about the world's finite resources in the hope that we will find solutions in the future. Avarice is not one of the seven deadly sins for nothing.

We believe the bread and wine of the Eucharist, which we say are 'the fruit of the earth and the work of human hands', are changed into Christ present among us. May these Eucharistic gifts rooted in our soil, effect in us a change that might enable us to have ears to hear the groan of creation as it calls for us to be careful sowers and responsible reapers. May our stand for justice always take into account the care our earth requires so that we have a productive planet to hand on to our children.

By how we choose to live now, may we hand it on to them in better shape than we found it.

© 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.

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.

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

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.

Today's Liturgy

Scripture Readings:

First: Isaiah 55:10-11
Second: Romans 8:18-23
Gospel: Matthew 13:1-23

Responsorial Psalm:

The seed that falls on good ground will yield a fruitful harvest.

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!
The seed is the word of God, Christ is the sower;
all who come to him will live for ever.
Alleluia!

Memorial Acclamation:

Save us, Saviour of the world,
for by your Cross and Resurrection
you have set us free.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Matthew's community

The gospel of Matthew is written at a time and particular context in which the community audience were feeling the effects of having been ostracised from the Jewish community. They were confounded by the fact that other Jews could not accept the reality of the Jesus message as they had. This parable, and the accompanying conversation with the disciples in which they are blessed for their understanding, would have been a comfort for the Matthew community. Although they were frustrated, they were being told through this story that not everyone is ready to hear the message that they had heard and accepted.

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...)

15th Week in Ordinary Time, Year A

Monday 13 July

Tuesday 14 July

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Wednesday 15 July

Memorial of St Bonaventure

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Thursday 16 July

9.30am Mass @ East Gresford

Friday 17 July

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Saturday 18 July

5.30pm Mass @ East Gresford

Sunday 19 July

16th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

Morning Tea at Dungog

Morning tea at Dungog will take place after the 9.30am Mass next Sunday (19 July) in the Dungog Parish Hall.

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

In Your Charity, Please Pray For:

Those Who Have Died:

Those Whose Anniversary of Death Is In July:

Kathleen Kealy, Veronica Trappel, Peter Fortunaso, Vera Pritchard, Maisie Atkins, George Allen, Alan Hinton, Eileen Sandiland, Daphny Massey, Paul Murphy, Lex Loudon, Samuel Rizzuto, Marie Garner, Maurice Garner, Ross Young, Pat Hartcher, Joyce Clark, Helen Hall, John Diver, Joan Mitchell, Kevin Murphy, Bert Preece, Nola Dooley, Tom Banister, Lyn Kerr, Max Hall, Marion Jordan, Bruno Rocco.

Those Who Are Sick and Unwell: Warren Wade, Keith Edwards, Jean Robertson, Jessica Byron, Gwen Trappel, Graham McCarthy, Paul Hardy, Monique Jones, John Newton, Francis Byron, Bernadette Richardson.

Papal Prayer Intention for July: "Let us pray for the respect and promotion of human life in all its stages, recognising it as a gift from God."

Electronic Banking Details

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