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.

20TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A) — 16 AUGUST 2026

Presbytery & Parish Office
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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).

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

Reflection by Dianne Bergant CSA

The overarching theme derived from today's readings is the question of insider-outsider. We see here that the divisions and barriers that emerge out of human experience have been shattered by the graciousness of God. Jesus' openness to 'the other' finds a precedent in the prophetic tradition. Isaiah spoke of a time when outsiders would join insiders in worshipping God, thus dissolving the categories of insider and outsider. He was, of course, referring to the age of eschatological fulfilment. This age dawned with the coming of Jesus. Jesus himself moved out of the constraints of his own cultural worldview, and he directs us to do the same. People are either excluded because of gender, culture or religious perspective, or included only because they are able and willing to conform to discriminatory standards. In the reign of God, this should not be the case. People are accepted along with their own cultural profiles.

God's embrace first enclosed even those who rejected Jesus, and then God's plan of salvation unfolded in a new way. An invitation to enter the kingdom was issued to the Gentiles, those who had been considered outsiders. If outsiders are now insiders, what has happened to the former insiders? Paul insists that they are still insiders. God has not simply shifted the identifying boundaries; God has dissolved them. In the interim between the dawning of the eschatological age and the end of time, the invitation to be included remains open to all.

Patronal Feast Day – St Helen's Church

This Tuesday, 18 August, is the Feast of St Helen and therefore a day of particular significance for our parish being the Feast of Title for St Helen's Church, East Gresford.

In light of this, Mass to mark the Feast of Title will be celebrated at 5.30pm in St Helen's Church on Tuesday 18 August. All parishioners are most welcome to come together to mark this occasion.

Following the Mass, everyone is invited to adjourn to the Hotel Beatty in East Gresford to share a meal together.

St Carlo Acutis Relics Mission

As the Diocese journeys towards Eucharist28 with Pope Leo XIV it will be hosting the first-class relics of a millennial Saint – Carlo Acutis – between 8 and 14 September.

During his young life, Carlo created the Eucharistic Miracle Exhibition, which will also accompany the tour. The pilgrimage has been drawing tens of thousands from across Australia and New Zealand these past months and the Diocese is looking forward to hosting the relics.

Visit the Diocesan website (t.ly/QsvbM) to see the schedule that covers the Reception of the Relic, Upper Hunter Encounter, Northern Region Encounter and the Newcastle City Basin Encounter.

Share Your Gifts and Make An Impact

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle is once again inviting parishioners to continue journeying towards strengthening the newly established Councils and Advisory Boards, as the diocese seeks to fill some vacancies that remain to be filled.

The 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 within 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, please visit t.ly/BKIAE.

Parish Financial Report

The Parish Financial Report for the 2025-26 Financial Year are available this weekend, before and after each of our Sunday Masses. Because of the sensitivity of this information, copies will not be left in the churches apart from our Sunday Masses.

Copies are also available to parishioners on request via email. Please direct your request via the Parish email on the front page of the bulletin.

Scriptural Context

This passage is the second of a group of three stories that make up Chapter 15 of Matthew's Gospel. The first story shows Jesus challenging traditional views of cleanliness and uncleanliness – one of the great separators between Jews and Gentiles. The story in this week's gospel follows with its account of the Canaanite woman's great faith being recognised. Finally, Matthew relates the story of the feeding of the four thousand – a dramatic sign by Jesus of the open invitation to receive his message and ministry. The three stories, taken together, form a powerful chapter that makes clear that the message of Jesus is not exclusively for the Jews.

Then Jesus answered her,
"Woman, great is your faith!
Let it be done for you as you wish."

Matthew 15:28 (NRSV)

World Youth Day 2027

Bishop Michael has announced the diocesan pilgrimage to South Korea and Japan for young people aged 16-35 next year. World Youth Day with Pope Leo XIV will be an enriching experience of pilgrimage for young people which has a profound impact on their relationship with Jesus, their prayer life, their lived mission, and their relationships with others.

Join diocesan authorities for the Reception of the Relic of WYD Patron Saint Carlo Acutis on 8 September and a WYD Launch Event featuring early information about this opportunity.

Learn more at WYD27Launch.eventbrite.com.au.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist – Part 5

At the end of Part 4, the gifts of bread and wine have been received, prepared and placed upon the altar, and the Presider has washed his hands to symbolise "the desire for interior purification" (*GIRM*, n.76).

As part of the transition from the "Take" part of the Liturgy of the Eucharist to the "Bless" part, the Presider says the Prayer over the Offerings, one of the prayers that make up the Proper of the Mass (along with the Collect and the Prayer after Communion).

The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* covers this very succinctly in n.77, while the *Order of Mass* provides a little more detail in nn.29-30.

The Prayer over the Offerings begins with an invitation to the entire assembly to pray, along with the Presider, that what is about to be offered, i.e., the gifts of bread and wine, will be acceptable to God.

At the end of this invitation, the assembly stands and responds accordingly, before the Presider extends his hands and prays the Prayer over the Offerings set down for that particular celebration.

The assembly gives its assent to that prayer by saying "Amen". With that "Amen", the gathered assembly moves to the praying of the Eucharistic Prayer.

The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* captures the fundamental nature of the Eucharistic Prayer in n.78, which is worth quoting in full:

> *Now the centre and high point of the entire celebration begins, namely, the Eucharistic Prayer itself, that is, the prayer of thanksgiving and sanctification. The [Presider] calls upon the people to life up their hearts towards the Lord in prayer and thanksgiving; he associates the people with himself in the Prayer that he addresses in the name of the entire community to God the Father through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, the meaning of this Prayer is that the whole congregation of the faithful joins with Christ in confessing the great deeds of God and in the offering of Sacrifice. The Eucharistic Prayer requires that everybody listens to it with reverence and in silence.*

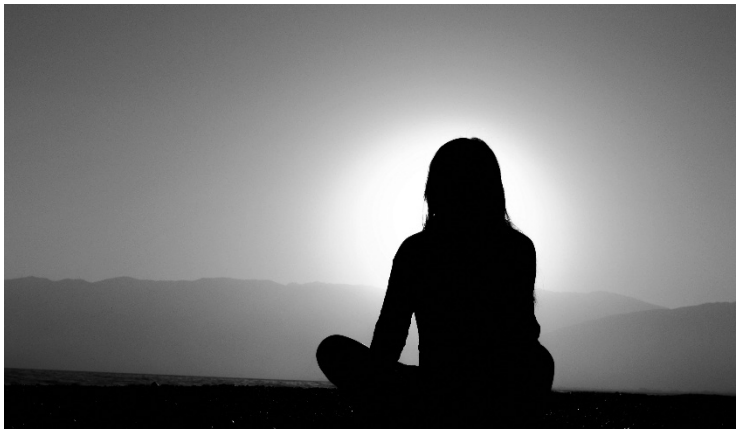
Before moving on, there are a couple of things that flow from this description that are worthy of some additional commentary.

Firstly, the Eucharistic Prayer is *not* the prayer of the presiding priest. At least, it is not his alone. The entire Eucharistic Prayer is prayed by the gathered assembly, although spoken aloud by the Presider "in the name of the entire community". This is not simply something "Father says"; this is our prayer, the prayer of the priestly people of God joined "with Christ in confessing the great deeds of God and in offering Sacrifice".

And secondly, because the Eucharistic Prayer is very much the prayer of the entire gathered assembly, its praying requires an active attentiveness "in reverence and silence". We do not 'turn off' at this point, nor perhaps should we become distracted by making sure we're on the right page of the personal missal in our hands. Our reverence and silence is exercised by *listening* to the prayer, our prayer, being spoken aloud on our behalf by the presiding priest. This "centre and high point of the entire celebration" surely warrants, indeed requires, our clear, undivided attention.

Next week, in Part 6 of our exploration of the Liturgy of the Eucharist, we will continue looking at the nature and content of the Eucharistic Prayer.

To be continued…



Simplicity September

This September, simplify one thing in your life and discover what truly matters.

Sponsor yourself, your family or a friend to participate and raise money for Palms International Volunteering, Australia's only Catholic lay organisation that delivers international development and formation through long term international volunteering.

Join Australians across the country supporting Palms' work in the Asia-Pacific.

For more information, call 02 9560 5333 or 0422 472 567.

SIMPLICITY SEPTEMBER • SCAN HERE • SIMPLICITY SEPTEMBER • SCAN HERE •

Visit www.simplicityseptember.org.au; or use the QR code here.

Today's Liturgy

Scripture Readings:
First: Isaiah 56:1, 6-7
Second: Romans 11:13-15, 29-32
Gospel: Matthew 15:21-28

Responsorial Psalm:
O God, let all the nations praise you!

Gospel Acclamation:
Alleluia, alleluia!
Jesus preached the Good News of the kingdom
and healed all who were sick.
Alleluia!

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

Free To A Good Home

Fr Andrew still has two computer monitors (27", older but still in good working order) that are surplus to need.

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

St Francis of Assis Parish acknowledges that we gather, live, and work upon the traditional lands of the Worrimi and Wonnarua people, who have walked upon and cared for this land for thousands of years.

We acknowledge their cultural heritage, beliefs, and deep spiritual attachment and connection to this land.

We pay our respects to their Elders – past, present, and emerging – and commit ourselves to working together for reconciliation and justice.

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.

Electronic Banking Details

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

The Parish Diary *(for the week ahead…)*

20th Week in Ordinary Time, Year A

Monday 17 August

Tuesday 18 August
Patronal Feast of St Helen
5.30pm Mass @ East Gresford

Wednesday 19 August
8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Thursday 20 August
Memorial of St Bernard
9.30am Mass @ East Gresford

Friday 21 August
Memorial of St Pius X
8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Saturday 22 August
Memorial of the Queenship of Mary
5.30pm Mass @ East Gresford

Sunday 23 August
21st 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 TODAY (16 August) in the Parish Hall. Please join us for good food, good company and good conversation. All welcome!

In Your Charity, Please Pray For:

Those Who Have Died: Rosemary Sheather.

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

Papal Prayer Intention for August: "Let us pray that in large cities marked by anonymity and loneliness we find new ways to proclaim the Gospel, discovering creative paths to build community."