

The Catholic Parishes of Branxton & Singleton are part of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle

Presentation of the Lord – Year A

2 February 2020

First Reading

Mal 3:1-4

A reading from the prophet Malachi.

The Lord God says this: Look, I am going to send my messenger to prepare a way before me. And the Lord you are seeking will suddenly enter his temple; and the angel of the covenant whom you are longing for, yes, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. Who will be able to resist the day of his coming? Who will remain standing when he appears? For he is like the refiner's fire and the fuller's alkali. He will take his seat as refiner and purifier; he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and then they will make the offering to the Lord as it should be made. The offering of Judah and Jerusalem will then be welcomed by the Lord as in former days, as in the years of old.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 23:7-10. R. v.10

**(R.) Who is this king of glory?
It is the Lord!**

O gates, lift up your heads;
grow higher, ancient doors.
Let him enter, the king of glory! **(R.)**

Who is the king of glory?
The Lord, the mighty, the valiant,
the Lord, the valiant in war. **(R.)**

O gates, lift up your heads;
grow higher, ancient doors.
Let him enter, the king of glory! **(R.)**

Who is he, the king of glory?
He, the Lord of armies,
he is the king of glory. **(R.)**

Second Reading

Heb 2:14-18

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

Since all the children share the same blood and flesh, Jesus too shared equally in it, so that by his death he could take away all the power of the devil, who had power over death, and set free all those who had been held in slavery all their lives by the fear of death. For it was not the angels that he took to himself; he took to himself descent from Abraham. It was essential that he should in this way become completely like his brothers so that he could be a compassionate and trustworthy high priest of God's religion, able to atone for human sins. That is, because he has himself been through temptation he is able to help others who are tempted.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Lk 2:32

Alleluia, alleluia!

**This is the light of revelation to the nations,
and the glory of your people Israel.
Alleluia!**

Gospel

Lk 2:22-40

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

When the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses, the parents of Jesus took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord – observing what stands written in the Law of the Lord: Every first-born male must be consecrated to the Lord – and also to offer in sacrifice, in accordance with what is said in the Law of the Lord, a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons. Now in Jerusalem there was a man named Simeon. He was an upright and devout man; he looked forward to Israel's comforting and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he had set eyes on the Christ of the Lord. Prompted by the Spirit he came to the Temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the Law required, he took him into his arms and blessed God, and he said:

'Now, Master, you can let your servant go in peace, just as you promised;
because my eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared for all the nations to see,
a light to enlighten the pagans
and the glory of your people Israel.'

As the child's father and mother stood there wondering at the things that were being said about him, Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, 'You see this child: he is destined for the fall and for the rising of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is rejected – and a sword will pierce your own soul too – so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare.'

There was a prophetess also, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was well on in years. Her days of girlhood over, she had been married for seven years before becoming a widow. She was now eighty-four years old and never left the Temple, serving God night and day with fasting and prayer. She came by just at that moment and began to praise God; and she spoke of the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem.

When they had done everything the Law of the Lord required, they went back to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. Meanwhile the child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom; and God's favour was with him.

The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.



EXPLORING THE WORD

This gospel text is another example of the 'manifestation' of who Jesus is. Luke sets his action in the heart of Judaism, in the temple itself. Mary and Joseph are pious Jews doing all that the Law requires of them. The two characters who are introduced— Simeon and Anna—are both also depicted by Luke as pious Jews. Simeon is 'an upright and devout man', while Anna 'served God night and day with fasting and prayer.' They would both have seen many first-born sons presented at the temple in consecration to the Lord. But they see something in this particular child that goes beyond the expected. They recognise this child as 'the salvation which you have prepared for all the nations', and Anna speaks of the child 'to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem'.

The reaction of the parents is natural under such circumstances: 'They stood there wondering at the things being said about him.' Mary is warned that being the mother of such a child will not be easy for her: 'a sword will pierce her soul.' For Mary, adherence to the will of God will come at a price.

- What do you understand will be your obligations once you are baptised or received into the church? Are there things that need to be clarified for you?
- How is Christ made manifest in the world today?
- Do you know people who you would describe as 'pious'? What does that mean?

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ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:

Your merciful love, O God, we have received in the midst of your temple. Your praise, O God, like your name, reaches the ends of the earth; your right hand is filled with saving justice.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON:

My eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in the sight of all the peoples.

NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURES

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time- Year A

1st Reading: Is 58:7-10

2nd Reading: 1 Cor 2:1-5

Gospel: Mt 5:13-16



Mass Roster

If you are unable to attend Mass for your rostered time, please arrange your own cover. If you no longer wish to be on the roster, please contact the Parish office on 5507 4048.

Mass Roster Sunday 9 February 2020						
Time	Welcomer	Commentator	Readers	Prayers	Gifts	Extra-ordinary Ministers
7am Singleton	C Crow J Walker	G Cattermole	J Duldulao H Duldulao	M Spinks	C O'Connor J Cox	D Nowland M Alsleben
10am Singleton	J Dries	J Patton	N Adler P Heher	F King	M Pease	M Stowe A Grant A Gibbon
6pm Singleton	Janssen Family		H Janssen N Janssen	E Janssen	Children's Liturgy	
6pm Saturday Branxton			S Hartcher C Szumilus		C Trunk Family	S Stafa E Bendeich J Partridge
8am Sunday Greta			L Gorczyca L Harrison		E Winter	C Campbell J Clarke C Miller
Counters ST PATS	4 Feb	R James	M Worden	Counting can be done from 9.30am at the Parish Office. If you are unable to attend please find someone to cover your counting.		

Faithful and compassionate God, your Spirit guides the Church and makes it holy; hear the prayers we offer, that in the particular ministry to which you have called us, may we serve you faithfully, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

Prayer Requests

Sick: Anne Boyd, Bernadette Coffey, Helen Conlin, Victoria Diputado, Bridgid Field, Janice Haines, Pat Holz, Billy Lewis, Charlie Nichols, Clare Quade, Anne Standing, Robert Walker, Sharon Wood. **Bring healing, comfort and peace to their bodies. Send strength to their carers.**

Anniversaries: Brian Dagg. **Having returned to the Father, may they rest in peace.**

Recently Deceased: Craig Standing. **May he rest in peace and light perpetual shine upon him.**

Baptism: Sage Woodhouse, Matilda Holz and Delilah Parnell (Singleton). **Called by name to be a child of God.**

Parish Contacts

Parish Priest	Fr Thomas Chirackal	Presbytery: 6578 9653 Mobile: 0470 246 021	Email: Thomas.chirackal@mn.catholic.org.au
Assistant Priest	Fr Anthony Coloma	Presbytery: 6578 9653	Email: anthony.coloma@mn.catholic.org.au
Parish Secretary	Mrs Erica Janssen	Parish Office: 02 5507 4048 (Tues-Fri, 9am-3pm) Unit 5, 16 Cambridge St, Singleton	Email: singleton.branxton@mn.catholic.org.au Web: www.singletoncatholicparish.org.au
St Patrick's Parish PLEASE PHONE THE PARISH OFFICE FOR BOOKINGS OF PARISH CHURCHES (5507 4048)			
Singleton	St Patrick's Church	Queen Street Singleton 2330	Contact: 02 5507 4048
Broke	Immaculate Conception Catholic Church	Wollombi Street, Broke	Contact: 0407 488 872 or 0458 626 299
Glendon Brook	St. Paul's Catholic Church	874 Glendonbrook Road, Glendon Brook	Contact: 6577 6168
St Brigid's Parish PLEASE PHONE THE PARISH OFFICE FOR BOOKINGS OF PARISH CHURCHES (5507 4048)			
Branxton	St Brigid's Catholic Church	Station St, Branxton 2335	Contact: 0407 381 525
Greta	St Catherine's Catholic Church	Branxton Street, Greta 2334	Contact: 0428 485 025

The Singleton and Branxton Parishes are on Facebook!



You can find us at: **Catholic Parishes of Singleton and Branxton** OR www.facebook.com/SingletonBranxtonCatholicParish

Schools in our Parish

St. Catherine's Catholic College	Principal: Mrs Niamh Marzol	K-12 Office: 02 6578 9600	Email: admin@singleton.catholic.edu.au
Rosary Park Catholic School	Principal: Miss Sallyanne Stanbridge	K-6 Office: 02 4938 1541	Email: admin@branxton.mn.catholic.edu.au
St Nicholas Early Education Centre	Contact: Ms Charlotte Nichols	Office: 02 4015 2860	Email: cnichols@stnicholasmn.org.au

Weekly Mass Diary

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
3 February	4 February	5 February St Agatha	6 February St Paul Miki & Companions	7 February	8 February	9 February 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time
<u>8.00am</u> Mass St Patrick's Singleton	<u>6.00pm</u> Mass St Patrick's Singleton	<u>9.20am</u> Mass St Patrick's Singleton	<u>6.00pm</u> Mass St Patrick's Singleton	<u>9.20am</u> Mass St Patrick's Singleton	<u>9.00am</u> Novena <u>9.20am</u> Mass <u>9.45am</u> Reconciliation St Patrick's Singleton <u>6.00pm</u> Mass Broke	<u>7.00am</u> Mass <u>10.00am</u> Mass FIESTA <u>6.00pm</u> Mass St Patrick's Singleton
	<u>9.20am</u> Mass St Catherine's Greta		<u>9.20am</u> Mass St Brigid's Branxton (Year 4)		<u>5.30pm</u> Reconciliation <u>6.00pm</u> Mass St Brigid's Branxton	<u>8.00am</u> Mass St Catherine's Greta

St Brigid, St Catherine, St Patrick and St Paul, and- pray for us

Weekly Notices

WELCOME TO OUR PARISH

We welcome visitors from all faith communities to our Mass. If you are new to our Parish we ask that you take a Welcome Pack from the back of the church, complete and return the Member forms and one of our welcoming team will contact you.

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians who have walked upon and cared for this land for thousands of years. We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

Parish Office Hours

The Parish Office will be closed on Friday 7 February 2020 and Friday 21 February 2020. Items for the Bulletins need to be with the office by 12pm on Wednesday.

2020 Sacramental Program

Children of the Branxton-Greta and Singleton Parishes interested in receiving the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation and First Holy Communion in 2020 are asked to contact the Parish Office on phone 5507 4048 or email singleton.branxton@mn.catholic.org.au.

Information meetings will be held in Singleton at St Patrick's Church on Wednesday 12 February 2020 at 5.30pm and in Branxton at St Brigid's Church on Wednesday 19 February 2020 at 5.30pm.

With an Everlasting Love – Lent Program

The Parishes of Branxton, Greta and Singleton will hold a Lenten Scriptural Program during the Season of Lent. We will gather every Wednesday of Lent from 4.00pm to 5.30pm at the Parish Office in Singleton to break open the Old and the New Testaments. This year's Lenten Bible Study will be facilitated by Fr. Anthony Coloma and will commence on Ash Wednesday (25 February 2020). Everyone is invited. Please register your interest through the Parish Office.

St Patrick's Women's Guild Meeting

The next meeting of the St Patrick's Women's Guild will be held on Wednesday 12 February 2020 at St Augustine's Hall commencing at 1.30pm. All are welcome and we would love to see you there.

St Brigid's Branxton Caritas 2020 Events

St Brigid's Branxton Caritas Group will be hosting the following events this year. Please phone Mercia Thomas for bookings. Please see the noticeboard for more details.

Friday 24 April 2020: Upper Hunter Tour of Darley stud, Martindale Homestead, lunch at Denman, wine tasting at Two Rivers Wines and more. Cost is \$100 per person. Names confirmed by 8 March 2020.

Thursday 23 July 2020: Christmas in July with Nathan Foley at Ettalong Diggers. Cost is \$75 per person. Names and payment by 30 June 2020.

Friday 21 August 2020: the very popular Annual Pilgrimage to MacKillop Place. Cost is \$45 per person.

Welcome Back to School

Wishing all the students and staff at Rosary Park Primary School and St Catherine's Catholic College a happy year of learning in 2020. Please be aware of school speed limits and parking restrictions when travelling around our schools.



Property for Rent



4/16 Cambridge Street, Singleton St Patrick's Commercial Centre

- Popular position with great street exposure.
- 694sqm on two levels with reception area, meeting/training rooms, open office area plus individual office spaces. Includes air conditioning and 19 off street car spaces.
- Rent \$90,000 PA + Outgoings \$8,600 PA + GST.

If you require any further information, please don't hesitate to contact Allan Cruickshanks from LJ Hooker Singleton on 0407 724 930.



Our Annual Parish Fiesta in honour of Señor Santo Niño (Holy Infant Jesus) IS ON AGAIN!!

Please join us on **Sunday 9th February 2020**
Celebrations will commence with 10:00am Mass
St Patrick's Church, Queen Street, Singleton

Then join the procession to Singleton Civic Centre,
Queen Street for lunch and entertainment!

Please RSVP on or before **5th February**
for catering purposes by placing your name in the
sheet provided at the back of the church

Vinnies Bush Fire Appeal Collection

Bushfires are currently devastating several communities across Australia. Hundreds of homes have been lost, livelihoods destroyed and tragically, some people have lost their loved ones. Vinnies is on the ground helping people as they deal with the immediate aftermath of fires, and we will continue to be there as they rebuild their lives in the long term.

Thank you to everyone who donated last weekend to the Vinnies Bush Fire Appeal. The total raised in Singleton parish was \$734.10, Branxton was \$183 and Greta raised \$595.20.

This emergency is unprecedented, and frighteningly, it is forecast to get even worse. Please donate urgently so Vinnies can be there for everyone needing our help. You can also donate online at <https://donate.vinnies.org.au/appeals-nsw/vinnies-nsw-bushfire-appeal-nsw>

Position Vacant Muswellbrook Parish

The St James Parish, Muswellbrook is looking for a Permanent Part-Time Secretary to work two days per week in their Parish Office. The position is being advertised on the Diocesan Web Site (click link below) and also on www.seek.com To apply please visit:

<https://www.mn.catholic.org.au/about/careers/positions-vacant> and click on Apply Now. Applications close 5th February.

ON RE-THINKING WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A CHURCH COMMUNITY

How did our Church experience in Branxton, Broke, Glendonbrook, Greta and Singleton facilitate the personal and communal encounter with God's loving and life-giving presence? How can we as a Catholic community promote to our fellow disciples, family members and the people in our shires the encounter with God's loving and life-giving presence?

Our Parish Priest, Fr Thomas Chirackal, has engaged the Pastoral Councils of our Parishes to outline the Parish Pastoral Plan of our communities. He has identified key, critical areas in the crafting of the pastoral plan: (1) Identity and Community; (2) Worship and Prayer; (3) Formation and Education; (4) Mission and Outreach; and, (5) Leadership and Structure. The plan is a living document, as it requires continued conversation with the parishioners and the various stakeholders of our Church communities.

It is from this necessity to enter into continued conversation that I am putting forward this personal reflection on the suggestion of our Parish Priest. I offer three points for your consideration: (1) the mission of proclaiming God's love and compassion; (2) the life-long process of Christian maturation and community strengthening; and, (3) the preferential option for the women and men in the margins.

THE MISSION OF PROCLAIMING GOD'S LOVE AND COMPASSION

The mission of our Parishes is to evangelize Branxton, Broke, Glendonbrook, Greta and Singleton, that is, to proclaim Christ, the Good News of God's love for all and to all. All our pastoral activities must both flow from our personal response to Christ and be carried out in the spirit of the Gospel. The Church exists to promote the Kingdom of God on earth (*Lumen Gentium*, 5). The Kingdom of God is like a treasure hidden in a field (Mt. 13) ... is like a net that gathers fish of every kind (Mt. 20:1) ... The blind see, the deaf hear, the sick are healed, the hungry are fed, the lowly are exalted, the mourners are comforted, prisoners are set free ... The Kingdom of God is within you (Lk. 17:21).

The Church, because it is the People of God and the Body of Christ enlivened by his Spirit, is called to be a sign and instrument of communion with God and of unity among all people (*Lumen Gentium*, 1). This, it does, by proclaiming Christ – the Good News of God's love for all people – and by working in the world for justice, peace and reconciliation. This mission finds its source and summit in the Eucharist which, when lived in everyday life and celebrated in the Liturgy, is both the living symbol of Christ's life, death and resurrection and celebrates the deepest identity of the Church as a communion of life, love and truth (*Lumen Gentium*, 9-11). All those who, through Baptism, have been initiated into the community of the Church have the right and duty to participate in its life and mission as a response to the Spirit in their lives (*Lumen Gentium*, 3).

THE LIFE-LONG PROCESS OF CHRISTIAN MATURATION AND COMMUNITY STRENGTHENING

To grow to Christian maturity and participate fully in Christ's mission, our Parish ministers, servants and parishioners must continually deepen our understanding of the faith through formation that is faithful to the Scriptures and Sacred Tradition. "Formation is not the privilege of a few but the right and duty of all ... Possibilities of formation should be proposed to all, especially the poor who can be a source of formation for all." (*Christifideles Laici*, 63)

Each community and ministry must seek out, recognize, and utilize the diversity of gifts, experience, knowledge, and competence of its members. It is better that many people be

involved, using their particular talents and abilities, than that a few try to do everything. "Allotting his gifts to everyone according as he wills" (1 Cor. 12: 11). "God distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank. By these gifts he makes them fit and ready to undertake the various tasks or offices advantageous to the up-building of the Church ... These gifts are to be received with thanksgiving" (*Lumen Gentium*, 12). We must respect and support the diversity of roles and functions in the community, those of the laity as well as those of the ordained ministers. The unity of purpose of all ministers is expressed in their union with the Bishop who as principal minister of the Eucharist, the Sacrament of unity, is the Chief Pastor of the Archdiocese. "For as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them...." (Rom. 12: 4-6).

THE PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE WOMEN AND MEN IN THE MARGINS

Moreover, it is also a demand of Christ for his disciples to follow Christ's own love of and preference for the poor. This option takes on the greatest urgency in our society where a number of our people wallow in poverty and misery. The common good dictates that more attention must be given to the less fortunate members of society – the homeless, the abandoned, people with mental health problems, among others.

We, as a Church, indeed, opt for all men, women and children of the world but above all, preferentially we opt like Jesus for the 'little ones,' the poor and marginalized of our societies. This is an essential option of Christian faith, an obligatory choice. Eternal salvation depends on the living out of a love of preference for the poor because the poor and needy bear the privileged presence of Christ.

Consistent with the Sacred Scriptures, the Tradition and the spirit of the Second Vatican Council, our Parish may opt to mark itself as a community of believers characterized by: (a) communal partnership and collaboration; (b) shared responsibility and leadership; (c) creative participation in community living and communal worship; (d) deep commitment to mission and service; and, (e) an understanding of the Church's work to build and to bring about the Kingdom of God today.

So, I ask you: (1) What have been the significant gifts and uniqueness our Community in brings to the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle and to the Catholic Church? (2) What direction should our Christian Community take within the next four or five years to address the various challenges and complexities our community is confronted with? (3) How can we put our acts together to put into fruition the direction we will set for our Church Community?

I hope that you would take your time to respond to these questions either by sending a note through the Parish Office or by engaging into a conversation the members of the Parish Councils.

Let us build our Church together!