



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

**Third Sunday of Lent – Year A**

**15 March 2020**

**First Reading**

*A reading from the book of Exodus.*

Tormented by thirst, the people complained against Moses. 'Why did you bring us out of Egypt?' they said. 'Was it so that I should die of thirst, my children too, and my cattle?' Moses appealed to the Lord. 'How am I to deal with this people?' he said. 'A little more and they will stone me!' The Lord said to Moses, 'Take with you some of the elders of Israel and move on to the forefront of the people; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the river, and go. I shall be standing before you there on the rock, at Horeb. You must strike the rock, and water will flow from it for the people to drink.' This is what Moses did, in the sight of the elders of Israel. The place was named Massah and Meribah because of the grumbling of the sons of Israel and because they put the Lord to the test by saying, 'Is the Lord with us, or not?' The Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

**Responsorial Psalm**

**Ps 94:1-2. 6-9. R. v.8**

**(R.) If today you hear his voice,  
harden not your hearts.**

Come, ring out our joy to the Lord;  
hail the rock who saves us.  
Let us come before him, giving thanks,  
with songs let us hail the Lord. **(R.)**

Come in; let us bow and bend low;  
let us kneel before the God who made us  
for he is our God and we  
the people who belong to his pasture,  
the flock that is led by his hand. **(R.)**

O that today you would listen to his voice!  
'Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,  
as on that day at Massah in the desert  
when your fathers put me to the test;  
when they tried me, though they saw my work.'  
**(R.)**

**Second Reading**

**Rom 5:1-2, 5-8**

*A reading from the second letter of St Paul to the Romans.*

Through our Lord Jesus Christ by faith we are judged righteous and at peace with God, since it is by faith and through Jesus that we have entered this state of grace in which we can boast about looking forward to God's glory. This hope is not deceptive, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given us. We were still helpless when at his appointed moment Christ died for sinful men. It is not easy to die even for a good man – though of course for someone really worthy, a man might be prepared to die – but what proves that God loves us is that Christ died for us while we were still sinners.

The Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

**Ex 17:3-7 Gospel Acclamation**

**See Jn 4:42,15**

**Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!  
Lord, you are truly the Saviour of the world;  
give me living water, that I may never thirst again.**

**Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!**

**Gospel**

**Jn 4:5-15, 19-26, 39-42 (short)**

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.*

Jesus came to the Samaritan town called Sychar, near the land that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Jacob's well is there and Jesus, tired by the journey, sat straight down by the well. It was about the sixth hour. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink.' His disciples had gone into the town to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, 'What? You are a Jew and you ask me, a Samaritan, for a drink?' – Jews, in fact, do not associate with Samaritans. Jesus replied:

'If you only knew what God is offering and who it is that is saying to you: Give me a drink, you would have been the one to ask, and he would have given you living water.'

'You have no bucket, sir,' she answered 'and the well is deep: how could you get this living water? Are you a greater man than our father Jacob who gave us this well and drank from it himself with his sons and his cattle?' Jesus replied:

'Whoever drinks this water will get thirsty again: but anyone who drinks the water that I shall give will never be thirsty again: the water that I shall give will turn into a spring inside him, welling up to eternal life.'

'Sir,' said the woman, 'give me some of that water, so that I may never get thirsty and never have to come here again to draw water. I see you are a prophet, sir. Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, while you say that Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship.' Jesus said:

'Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know; for salvation comes from the Jews. But the hour will come – in fact it is here already – when true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth: that is the kind of worshipper the Father wants. God is spirit, and those who worship must worship in spirit and truth.'

The woman said to him, 'I know that Messiah – that is, Christ – is coming; and when he comes he will tell us everything.' 'I who am speaking to you,' said Jesus 'I am he.'

Many Samaritans of that town had believed in him on the strength of the woman's testimony, so, when the Samaritans came up to him, they begged him to stay with them. He stayed for two

days, and when he spoke to them many more came to believe; and they said to the woman, 'Now we no longer believe because of what you told us; we have heard him ourselves and we know that he really is the saviour of the world.'

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



**EXPLORING THE WORD**

This gospel should be read in conjunction with the first reading from Exodus, in which the people of Israel, liberated from slavery in Egypt, are left thirsting in the desert. God provides them with water to sustain their journey through the wilderness to the Promised Land. In the gospel, the thirst of the Samaritan woman is a much more profound thirst, and her openness to the living water offered by Jesus and her gradual journey to faith are at the heart of this text. She moves from a superficial understanding that Jesus may be offering her a permanent supply of water to a deeper appreciation of him as one who intimately understands the yearning of the human heart and offers her a way forward. Not only does the woman come to faith but she is also instrumental in leading others to belief, using the classic words of invitation to discipleship in John's Gospel: 'Come and see a man ... I wonder if he is the Christ?'

- Do you sometimes have a superficial understanding of what Jesus offers? How can you continue to deepen your appreciation of Jesus?
- What 'thirst' characterises your life at the moment?

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**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:**

My eyes are always on the Lord,  
for he rescues my feet from the snare.  
Turn to me and have mercy on me,  
for I am alone and poor.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON:**

For anyone who drinks it, says the Lord,  
the water I shall give will become in him  
a spring welling up to eternal life.

**NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURES**

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent- Year A

**1st Reading:** 1 Sm 16:1, 6-7, 10-13

**2nd Reading:** eph 5:8-14

**Gospel:** Jn 9:1-41



**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 22 March 2020						
Time	Welcomer	Commentator	Readers	Prayers	Gifts	Extra-ordinary Ministers
<b>7am Singleton</b>	C Crow J Walker	G Cattermole	E Thomas J Tindale	J Cox	J Walker H Standing	J Dunn
<b>10am Singleton</b>	L & P Boyce		R James J Bray	M Dagg	M Petrie & Helper	T Cochrane A Cochrane
<b>6pm Singleton</b>	J Brackenrig	H Rapp	H Rapp O Brackenrig C Brackenrig	K Stuart	CLoW	
<b>6pm Saturday Branxton</b>			M Porter M Thomas		S McAlister N Bendeich	C Trunk J Partridge G Jacobs
<b>8am Sunday Greta</b>			T Dagg L Gorczyca		J & G Nightingale	L Harrison C Campbell C Miller
<b>Counters ST PATS</b>	<b>17 March</b>	J Brackenrig	F King	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, Peter Ernst, Bridgid Field, Janice Haines, Pat Holz, Billy Lewis, Charlie Nichols, Clare Quade, Anne Standing and Sharon Wood. **Bring healing, comfort and peace to their bodies. Send strength to their carers.**

**Anniversaries:** Paul Dunn, Gregory McShane, Harold Thrift, Mary Lynch. **Having returned to the Father, may they rest in peace.**

**Recently Deceased:** Don Adams (Scone). **May they rest in peace and light perpetual shine upon them.**

**RCIA Candidate:** Tyler Evans (Singleton). **Called to be a light in the World.**

## Parish Contacts

Parish Priest	<b>Fr Thomas Chirackal</b>	Presbytery: 6578 9653 Mobile: 0470 246 021	Email: <a href="mailto:Thomas.chirackal@mn.catholic.org.au">Thomas.chirackal@mn.catholic.org.au</a>
Assistant Priest	<b>Fr Anthony Coloma</b>	Presbytery: 6578 9653	Email: <a href="mailto:anthony.coloma@mn.catholic.org.au">anthony.coloma@mn.catholic.org.au</a>
Parish Secretary	<b>Mrs Erica Janssen</b>	Parish Office: 02 5507 4048 (Tues-Fri, 9am-3pm) Unit 5, 16 Cambridge St, Singleton	Email: <a href="mailto:singleton.branxton@mn.catholic.org.au">singleton.branxton@mn.catholic.org.au</a> Web: <a href="http://www.singletoncatholicparish.org.au">www.singletoncatholicparish.org.au</a>
<b>St Patrick's Parish PLEASE PHONE THE PARISH OFFICE FOR BOOKINGS OF PARISH CHURCHES (5507 4048)</b>			
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
<b>St Brigid's Parish PLEASE PHONE THE PARISH OFFICE FOR BOOKINGS OF PARISH CHURCHES (5507 4048)</b>			
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](http://www.facebook.com/SingletonBranxtonCatholicParish)

## Schools in our Parish

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

## Weekly Mass Diary

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>16 March</b>	<b>17 March</b> ST PATRICK	<b>18 March</b>	<b>19 March</b> ST JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY	<b>20 March</b>	<b>21 March</b>	<b>22 March</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent
<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 (Year 5 & 6)	<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 Glendonbrook	<u>7.00am</u> Mass <u>10.00am</u> Mass <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 1)		<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.



St Patrick's Parish extend a very warm welcome to all who are attending our special Parish Mass this Sunday for the **Feast of St Patrick and the Bicentenary of Patrick's Plains (Singleton)**. Please join us for morning tea and special presentations in St Catherine's College Hall after Mass.

## **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. Everyone is invited.

## **St Patrick's Parish Debutante Ball 2020**

The St Patrick's Parish Debutante Ball Committee are pleased to announce that the 2020 Ball will be held on Friday 11 September 2020 at Singleton Civic Centre. Girls in the Year 11 age group are invited to make their debut at this ball. Any interested girls are encouraged to attend the information evening on **Monday 16 March 2020 at 6.45pm** in the St Catherine's College Senior Library. For more information email [stpatricksparish.debball@outlook.com](mailto:stpatricksparish.debball@outlook.com).

## **St Patrick's Playgroup**

The St Patrick's Playgroup has begun their new year of fun! You can join them each Friday between 9am-12pm in the old junior school in Patrick St, Singleton. They provide inside and outside play for the children aged between 0-school age. It's a great opportunity for you and your child/ren to make new friends – especially before they start to school. They would love to see some new faces! Cost is free for your first visit and then \$30 for the year. All welcome to come and enjoy a morning out and let the kids PLAY!

## **Change of Mass times in Branxton**

In previous years, evening Mass times in the Branxton Parish have been changed from 6pm to 5pm when daylight savings finishes. The decision was put to vote at Mass on Saturday 7 March and the result was 30 in favour of 6pm, 9 in favour of 5pm. This result included votes received by the Parish Office. **This year, Mass will remain at 6pm throughout the year in the Branxton Parish.**

## **Ukrainian Mass at Greta**

To celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the first Ukrainian Mass said in Greta, Mass will be said on **Thursday 26 March 2020 at 10am** in St Catherine's Church. All welcome to attend.

## **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 on 4938 1362. Please see the noticeboard for more details.

**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.

## **Update on COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus)**

In light of the current concerns about the COVID-19 (novel coronavirus), the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle is observing the following precautions until further notice:

1. Individuals should consider their potential to infect others with an infectious disease, before attending a public liturgical celebration.
2. Holy water stoops are to be emptied of holy water.
3. When exchanging the sign of peace, members of the assembly are to avoid shaking hands.
4. Holy Communion from the Chalice is to be restricted to the celebrant(s) for the time being.
5. Holy Communion is not to be given on the tongue until further notice.
6. Alcohol-based gels or other hand sanitisers, tissues and bins will be available near the entrances to church building.
7. Parishioners are to be reminded that if they are too unwell to attend Sunday Mass, they can fulfil the Sunday obligation by prayer within their home, reading the Scriptures, or watching Mass on television.
8. Those assisting in the distribution of Holy Communion are to observe good hand hygiene.
9. More detail on these measures can be found on the notice board.

## **Project Compassion – 3<sup>rd</sup> Week of Lent**

Barry grew up in a tough environment. With the support of a program from Caritas Australia's partner, Red Dust Healing, Barry has overcome many of life's challenges. He is now an inspirational father to his four girls and a leader in his community.

**Please donate to Project Compassion 2020 and help vulnerable people like Barry, so that they are empowered to assist members of their communities in Australia.**



You can donate through Parish boxes and envelopes, by visiting [www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion](http://www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion) or phoning 1800 024 413.

## **Diocesan Library Survey**

The Maitland Newcastle Diocese is presently in the process of re-establishing a Diocesan Library and exploring faith formation opportunities. The library aims to provide a relevant, accessible and current information service to support the faith and religious dimensions of the dioceses. Your response to the questions will be used to help inform decisions. DOMN library and Faith Formation

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Q2SCXN6>

## **Christian Formation Course 2020**

The 2020 Christian Formation Course will commence on 28 April. Participants can choose to attend on Tuesday evenings at CatholicCare, Mayfield or Wednesday mornings at the Corcoran Centre, Morpeth. This course introduces participants to scripture, theology, church history, sacramental life and spirituality – perfect PD for anyone teaching in a Catholic school. For more information see the flyer on the noticeboard or the Adult Faith Formation page on [mn.catholic.org.au](http://mn.catholic.org.au).

# let's celebrate

17 March marks the feast of our Church's patron, St Patrick. As one community, we will gather to celebrate this feast this Sunday 15 March during our 10.00am mass which will be followed by morning tea in the St Catherine's Catholic College Hall. The College is also displaying memorabilia from the College and the Parish to celebrate Singleton's 200th founding anniversary, which was first named Patrick's Plains after our patron Saint.

While preparing for this celebration, it is realized that we are celebrating our 175th anniversary of the founding of St Patrick's Parish this year. Some may contest this since a plaque has been fixed in the Church recognizing 1846 as the year we were founded. However, research published by Michael Sternbeck in 1997 points to the arrival of the Augustinian priest and our first Pastor, Father Michael Stephens OSA, as the day of our foundation as a Parish. He arrived in Singleton on the 5th of October 1845.

As we gather on the feast of St Patrick to celebrate Singleton's Bicentenary, you are invited to think about how we, as one Parish community, can celebrate our 175th Founding Anniversary later this year.



## MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS FOR LENT 2020

*"We implore you on behalf of Christ,  
be reconciled to God" (2 Cor 5:20)*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This year the Lord grants us, once again, a favourable time to prepare to celebrate with renewed hearts the great mystery of the death and resurrection of Jesus, the cornerstone of our personal and communal Christian life. We must continually return to this mystery in mind and heart, for it will continue to grow within us in the measure that we are open to its spiritual power and respond with freedom and generosity.

### 3. God's passionate will to dialogue with his children

The fact that the Lord once again offers us a favourable time for our conversion should never be taken for granted. This new opportunity ought to awaken in us a sense of gratitude and stir us from our sloth. Despite the sometimes tragic presence of evil in our lives, and in the life of the Church and the world, this opportunity to change our course expresses God's unwavering will not to interrupt his dialogue of salvation with us. In the crucified Jesus, who knew no sin, yet for our sake was made to be sin (cf. 2 Cor 5:21), this saving will led the Father to burden his Son with the weight of our sins, thus, in the expression of Pope Benedict XVI, "turning God against himself" (*Deus Caritas Est*, 12). For God also loves his enemies (cf. Mt 5:43-48).

The dialogue that God wishes to establish with each of us through the paschal mystery of his Son has nothing to do with empty chatter, like that attributed to the ancient inhabitants of Athens, who "spent their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new" (Acts 17:21). Such chatter, determined by an empty and superficial curiosity, characterizes worldliness in every age; in our own day, it can also result in improper use of the media.

Rome, at Saint John Lateran, 7 October 2019  
Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary

To be continued during the weeks of Lent...

## Lent & Easter



### Stations of the Cross

St Patrick's Church, Singleton  
St Brigid's Church, Branxton

Wednesdays of Lent after 9.20am Mass  
Thursdays of Lent after 9.20am Mass

### Reconciliation

St Patrick's Church, Singleton  
St Patrick's Church, Singleton  
St Brigid's Church, Branxton

Wednesday 25 March 2020, 6pm – Sacramental Program  
Thursday 26 March 2020, 6pm - Parish  
Wednesday 1 April 2020, 6pm – Sacramental Program

### Palm Sunday - 4 April

Branxton 6pm, Greta 8am, Singleton 7am, 10am and 6pm

### Chrism Mass

Tuesday 7 April 2020  
Sacred Heart Cathedral  
Hamilton 7.00pm

### Good Friday - 10 April

Stations of the Cross  
St Patrick's Church, 11.00am  
St Brigid's Church, 10.00am

### Holy Saturday - 11 April

Easter Vigil  
St Patrick's Church, 6.30pm  
St Brigid's Church, 6.30pm

### Thursday of Holy Week - 9 April

Mass of the Lord's Supper  
St Patrick's Church 6.30pm  
St Brigid's Church, TBA

### Passion of the Lord

St Patrick's Church, 3pm  
St Catherine's Church, 3pm

### Easter Sunday - 12 April

St Catherine's Church, 8am  
St Patrick's Church, 10am