

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

Fourth Sunday of Lent – Year A

22 March 2020

First Reading 1 Sm 16:1. 6-7. 10-13
A reading from the first book of Samuel.

The Lord said to Samuel, 'Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have chosen myself a king among his sons.' When Samuel arrived, he caught sight of Eliab and thought, 'Surely the Lord's anointed one stands there before him,' but the Lord said to Samuel, 'Take no notice of his appearance or his height for I have rejected him; God does not see as man sees; man looks at appearances but the Lord looks at the heart.' Jesse presented his seven sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, 'The Lord has not chosen these.' He then asked Jesse, 'Are these all the sons you have?' He answered, 'There is still one left, the youngest; he is out looking after the sheep.' Then Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send for him; we will not sit down to eat until he comes.' Jesse had him sent for, a boy of fresh complexion, with fine eyes and pleasant bearing. The Lord said, 'Come, anoint him, for this is the one.' At this, Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him where he stood with his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord seized on David and stayed with him from that day on.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 22 R. v.1
(R.) The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green are the pastures
where he gives me repose.
Near restful waters he leads me,
to revive my drooping spirit. (R.)

He guides me along the right path;
he is true to his name.
If I should walk in the valley of darkness
no evil would I fear.
You are there with your crook and your staff;
with these you give me comfort. (R.)

You have prepared a banquet for me
In the sight of my foes.
My head you have anointed with oil;
my cup is overflowing. (R.)

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me
all the days of my life.
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell
for ever and ever. (R.)

Second Reading Eph 5:8-14
A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians.

You were darkness once, but now you are light
in the Lord; be like children of light, for the
effects of the light are seen in complete

discover what the Lord wants of you, having
nothing to do with the futile works of darkness
but exposing them by contrast. The things which
are done in secret are things that people are
ashamed even to speak of; but anything
exposed by the light will be illuminated and
anything illuminated turns into light. That is why
it is said:

Wake up from your sleep,
rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation Jn 8:12

Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!
I am the light of the world, says the Lord;
whoever follows me will have the light of
life.

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

Gospel Jn 9:1. 6-9. 13-17. 34-38 (short)
A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had
been blind from birth. He spat on the ground,
made a paste with the spittle, put this over the
eyes of the blind man and said to him, 'Go and
wash in the Pool of Siloam' (a name that means
'sent'). So the blind man went off and washed
himself, and came away with his sight restored.
His neighbours and people who earlier had seen
him begging said, 'Isn't this the man who used
to sit and beg?' Some said, 'Yes, it is the same
one.' Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.'
The man himself said, 'I am the man.'

They brought the man who had been blind to
the Pharisees. It had been a sabbath day when
Jesus made the paste and opened the man's
eyes, so when the Pharisees asked him how he
had come to see, he said, 'He put a paste on my
eyes, and I washed, and I can see.' Then some
of the Pharisees said, 'This man cannot be from
God: he does not keep the sabbath.' Others
said, 'How could a sinner produce signs like
this?' And there was disagreement among them.
So they spoke to the blind man again, 'What
have you to say about him yourself, now that he
has opened your eyes?' 'He is a prophet' replied
the man.

'Are you trying to teach us,' they replied 'and you
a sinner through and through, since you were
born!' And they drove him away.
Jesus heard they had driven him away, and
when he found him he said to him, 'Do you
believe in the Son of Man?' 'Sir,' the man
replied 'tell me who he is so that I may believe
in him.' Jesus said, 'You are looking at him; he
is speaking to you.' The man said, 'Lord, I believe',
and worshipped him.

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



EXPLORING THE WORD

There are two main points of today's
gospel: the blind man's journey towards
faith and belief, and the contrast between
the attitudes of the blind man and his
interrogators. Like the Samaritan woman
at the well in last week's gospel, the blind
man gradually moves from lack of faith to
faith. First the blind man refers to the one
who effected his cure as 'the man called
Jesus', then he proclaims him a prophet
and a man from God, and finally he
declares, 'Lord, I believe' and worships
him. This openness to the revelation of
God acting in Jesus is contrasted with the
'blindness' of the Pharisees, who, though
physically able to see, do not recognise
Jesus. The blind man tellingly declares,
'Now here is an astonishing thing! He has
opened my eyes and you don't know
where he comes from!' John's use of the
term 'the Jews' indicates that this group
is from the religious leadership, the very
people who are trained in the Law and
ways of God. They, of all people, should
know what is from God!

- Are there still things that block your total belief?
- What are the signs of God's presence in your life?

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ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:

Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her.
Be joyful, all who were in mourning;
exult and be satisfied at her consoling
breast.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON:

The Lord anointed my eyes: I went, I
washed, I saw and I believed in God.

NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURES

5th Sunday of Lent- Year A

1st Reading: Ez 37:12-14

2nd Reading: Rom 8:8-11

Gospel: Jn 11:1-45

**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 29 March 2020						
Time	Welcomer	Commentator	Readers	Prayers	Gifts	Extra-ordinary Ministers
7am Singleton						
10am Singleton						
6pm Singleton						
6pm Saturday Branxton						
8am Sunday Greta						
Counters ST PATS						

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: 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: Michael Markham, Arlene Thomas. **Having returned to the Father, may they rest in peace.**

Recently Deceased: Anne Boyd. **May they rest in peace and light perpetual shine upon them.**

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

Baptisms: Colton Ragh and Harrison Smith (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	<i>St Patrick's Church</i>	Queen Street Singleton 2330	Contact: 02 5507 4048
Broke	<i>Immaculate Conception Catholic Church</i>	Wollombi Street, Broke	Contact: 0407 488 872 or 0458 626 299
Glendon Brook	<i>St. Paul's Catholic Church</i>	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	<i>St Brigid's Catholic Church</i>	Station St, Branxton 2335	Contact: 0407 381 525
Greta	<i>St Catherine's Catholic Church</i>	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
23 March	24 March	25 March THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD	26 March	27 March	28 March	29 March 5 th Sunday of Lent
ALL PUBLIC MASS CELEBRATIONS SUSPENDED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE						

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.

Keeping Sunday Holy – What Can We Do?

To assist individuals and families during this time, the Diocesan Liturgy Council has offered the following options, particularly in keeping Sunday holy:

1. **Praying with the Sunday readings:** Such prayer may take many forms including Lectio Divina and Liturgies of the Word in families or small groups. Parishes may like to download the 'Weekly Prayer Sheet' with the Sunday readings from LiturgyHelp and email it to parishioners.

2. **The Prayer of the Church:** We recommend morning and evening prayer to individuals and families. We suggest downloading the Universalis App which contains not only the Prayer of the Church but also the Mass of the day and many other things. See also: <https://liturgy.life/2020/03/keeping-sunday-holy-when-we-cannot-gather-for-mass-liturgy-of-the-hours/>

3. **Recorded Homilies:** The homilies of Bishop Bill or Fr Andrew from the Cathedral Mass on Sundays will be recorded and made available online by lunch time on Sundays. These may help in individual or small group reflections on the readings of the day. These homilies can be accessed via Spotify or iTunes.

4. **Mass Streamed from Sacred Heart Cathedral:** As already mentioned, the Diocese and Cathedral is currently investigating the possibility of livestreaming the Sunday Mass from Sacred Heart Cathedral celebrated by the Bishop or the Vicar General. Further information will be made available via the Diocesan website, which will also host the livestream if it becomes available.

The resources from LiturgyHelp can be of great assistance at this time in two significant ways:

This is the time to use LiturgyHelp to its fullest capacity. Make sure you are using your fifty part-username and logins for all your liturgical and pastoral ministers. Those who have access are encouraged to continue to reach out to members of the community during this time. For example, parish secretaries or Children's Liturgy ministers could download the resources under 'children' on the Sunday menu, and then send them to the families of children who would normally participate in Children's Liturgy, or to those who were enrolled in the sacramental journey.

Everyone in the diocese – individuals and families – can access a range of resources being made available through a special login. Parishioners should go to liturgyhelp.com/aus/mn/generalaccess, and enter their name and email address. This is for all people in communities connected to the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle and will be available from Midday on Friday 20 March.

The resources available on the special login access version of LiturgyHelp will grow over time and initially include:

- Access to the daily readings
- Access to the daily Missal texts
- Sunday Prayer Services (Liturgy of the Word and weekly prayer sheets)
- Sunday and Special Feasts Scripture Commentary
- Sunday and Special Feasts Homily and Reflection

- Sunday Universal Prayer
- General prayer – traditional, prayers to our Lady and litanies.
- Sunday Prayer of the Church (Divine Office) from 29 March (morning and evening prayer)

There will be the possibility for us to augment this section over time if that were needed.

A Moment to Reflect

This moment of crisis is for all people, especially people of faith, an opportunity. What is God revealing to us in this unusual moment of hunger for Eucharist? We believe in the centrality of the word of God to our lives as disciples and as a community of the faithful. This is an opportunity to immerse ourselves in the word and to deepen the way we abide in the Word. Who might we become over this time if we do turn to the Word of God as the primary source of our sustenance? We have largely ignored the treasure of the Prayer of the Church – primarily Morning and Evening Prayer. Who might we become if we prayed this prayer and became more familiar with the Psalms and the human cries we hear there?

Let us seize this opportunity so that when this moment is over we might return to our celebration of eucharist with a deeper love for it and a renewed sense of what it means to participate fully and consciously and actively in the Paschal Mystery and life of our Triune God

For reflection

Article by Massimo Faggioli: Mass Myopia and Coronavirus

With an Everlasting Love – Lent Program

The last sessions of the "With an Everlasting Love" program have been cancelled. Thank you to those who attended.

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 23 March 2020 at 6.45pm in the Parish Office. For more information email stpatricksparish.debball@outlook.com.

St Patrick's Playgroup

The St Patrick's Playgroup will be closed until further notice. We look forward to welcoming all our families back once it is safe to do so.

Project Compassion – 3rd Week of Lent

Thirty-two-year-old Sakun lives in a village in central east India. She developed polio as a child and has difficulty walking. After joining a Caritas Australia-funded program, Sakun has learned new skills and gained important mobility. She is more resilient, more confident and more independent.

Please donate to Project Compassion 2020 to help uplift vulnerable communities and support the rights of indigenous peoples around the world.



You can donate by visiting www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion or phoning 1800 024 413.



Diocesan Library Survey

The Maitland Newcastle Diocese is re-establishing a Diocesan Library and exploring faith formation opportunities. Please help us find the right content for the library by completing our survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Q2SCXN6>



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...

COVID-19 UPDATE - SINGLETON AND BRANXTON PARISHES 20 MARCH 2020

In accordance with the Government regulations and the direction of the Office of Bishop William Wright the celebration of public Mass was suspended as of Thursday 19 March 2020 – this includes Sunday and weekday Mass and will include Holy Week and Triduum celebrations. We understand that this is difficult to comprehend, however, this is in the interest of the safety of all of us and the wider community, to help prevent the spread of this virus.

1. **Mass will be recorded each day in our Parish churches.** Vigil Masses will be loaded by 6.30pm and daily Masses by 9.30am. They can be viewed on
 - a. our Facebook page (Catholic Parishes of Singleton and Branxton)
 - b. our website (www.singletoncatholicparish.org.au)
2. **Individual Reconciliation** will be offered in the churches by our priests at the following times:
 - a. Singleton 9am Saturdays,
 - b. Greta, 9.20am Tuesday,
 - c. Branxton, Thursday 9.20am
3. **St Patrick's Church will open** each day during daylight hours for private prayer.
4. If you come to use the church, please be aware that there may be others there and you should **exercise social distancing** measures within the church and sit at least 1.5m apart. There should not be more than 100 people.
5. **Please do not leave any items in the Church** – this includes tissues, books or bibles.
6. If you collect a bulletin to read, please take this with you and do not leave on the table.
7. The NSW Department of Health advises **the best way to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus** is to:
 - a. Stay home if you are sick
 - b. Clean your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, or with an alcohol-based hand rub
 - c. Cover your nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing with a tissue or a flexed elbow
 - d. Avoid close contact with anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms
 - e. Practice cough etiquette: keep away from other people, cover coughs and sneezes with disposable tissues or clothing, and clean your hands.
8. **Baptisms** will still be held in accordance with the direction of the Diocese. Please contact the office for booking details.
9. **Any updates** will be posted on our Facebook page and website.