

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

**Fourth Sunday of Advent, Year B**

**20 December 2020**

**First Reading 2 Sm 7:1-5. 8-12. 14. 16**  
*A reading from the second book of Samuel.*

Once David had settled into his house and the Lord had given him rest from all the enemies surrounding him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, 'Look, I am living in a house of cedar while the ark of God dwells in a tent'. Nathan said to the king, 'Go and do all that is in your mind, for the Lord is with you.'

But that very night the word of the Lord came to Nathan:

'Go and tell my servant David, "Thus the Lord speaks: Are you the man to build me a house to dwell in? I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be leader of my people Israel; I have been with you on all your expeditions; I have cut off all your enemies before you. I will give you fame as great as the fame of the greatest on earth. I will provide a place for my people Israel; I will plant them there and they shall dwell in that place and never be disturbed again; nor shall the wicked continue to oppress them as they did, in the days when I appointed judges over my people Israel; I will give them rest from all their enemies. The Lord will make you great; the Lord will make you a House. And when your days are ended and you are laid to rest with your ancestors, I will preserve the offspring of your body after you and make his sovereignty secure. I will be a father to him and he a son to me. Your House and your sovereignty will always stand secure before me and your throne be established for ever."

The Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

**Responsorial Psalm**  
**Ps 88:2-5. 27. 29. R. see v.2**

**(R.) For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.**

I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord; through all ages my mouth will proclaim your truth.

Of this I am sure, that your love lasts for ever, that your truth is firmly established as the heavens. **(R.)**

'I have made a covenant with my chosen one;

I have sworn to David my servant: I will establish your dynasty for ever and set up your throne through all ages.' **(R.)**

He will say to me: 'You are my father, my God, the rock who saves me.' I will keep my love for him always; for him my covenant shall endure. **(R.)**

**Second Reading Rom 16:25-27**  
*A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans.*

Glory to him who is able to give you the strength to live according to the Good News I preach, and in which I proclaim Jesus Christ, the revelation of a mystery kept secret for endless ages, but now so clear that it must be broadcast to pagans everywhere to bring them to the obedience of faith. This is only what scripture has predicted, and it is all part of the way the eternal God wants things to be. He alone is wisdom; give glory therefore to him through Jesus Christ for ever and ever. Amen.

The Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel Acclamation Lk 1:38**

**Alleluia, alleluia!**  
**I am the servant of the Lord:**  
**may his will for me be done.**  
**Alleluia!**

**Gospel Lk 1:26-38**  
*The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.*

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?' 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you' the angel answered 'and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.' 'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary 'let what you have said be done to me.' And the angel left her.

The Gospel of the Lord

**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**



## **REFLECTION**

**by Fr Michael Tate**

### **'Spirit Hovering'**

St Luke's account of the Annunciation draws on the Jewish tradition describing creation: 'There was darkness over the deep and God's Spirit hovered over the water. God said: "Let there be light", and there was light.' (Genesis 1:2-3) St Luke depicts Mary hearing in the depths of her soul: 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow.'

The Holy Spirit hovers over this young Jewish woman so that the most stupendously creative act in human history can take place. With her consent, God assumes human nature to be gradually enfleshed, embodied, in Mary's womb.

A naturally bewildered young woman was able to respond to God's will because she understood the imagery and the symbolism of the Genesis Story. We, in turn, need to read the Gospels in all their Jewishness so that we can understand when God's Holy Spirit hovers over our lives, asking us to fulfil some particular role in the Divine Plan.

We could pause for a moment to ask whether *now* is the time for a Marian response: 'Be it done unto me according to your word.'

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**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:**

Drop down dew from above, you heavens, and let the clouds rain down the Just One; let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON:**

Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear.

Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.

**NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURES**

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph, Year B

**1st Reading:** Sir 3:2-6, 12-14

**2nd Reading:** Col 3:12-21

**Gospel:** Lk 2:22-40



# Prayer Requests

**Sick:** Bernadette Coffey, Bill Damstra, Janice Haines, Austin Hoffman, Helen Conlin, Anne Standing, Alan Thomas, John Thomas, Gloria Trunk, Lorraine Winter and Sharon Wood. **Bring healing, comfort and peace to their bodies. Send strength to their carers.**

**Anniversaries:** Catherine Ernst, Mary Bonser, Gordon Wright, Melyssah-Anne Thomas. **Having returned to the Father, may they rest in peace.**

**Baptisms:** Henry Thompson (St Patrick's Singleton, Sunday). **Called by name to be a child of God.**

**Parish Contacts**

Parish Priest	<b>Fr Thomas Chirackal</b>	Presbytery: 6578 9651	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 9650	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>
Facebook	Catholic Parishes of Singleton and Branxton		singletonbranxton@parish_sb
		<b>YouTube</b>	
		<b>Twitter</b>	
<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

**Schools in our Parishes**

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 Singleton	<b>Director: Ms Saleena Rosee</b>	Office: 02 4015 2860	Email: <a href="mailto:singleton@stnicholasmn.org.au">singleton@stnicholasmn.org.au</a>
St Nicholas Early Education Branxton	<b>Director: Ms Trudy McGovern</b>	Office: 02 4931 1220	Email: <a href="mailto:branxton@stnicholasmn.org.au">branxton@stnicholasmn.org.au</a>

**Mass Roster Sunday 27 December 2020**

	Branxton Saturday 6pm	Greta Sunday 8am	Singleton Sunday 7am	Singleton Sunday 10am	Singleton Sunday 6pm	Counters
<b>Welcomer</b>		D & J Clarke	J Walker C Crow	P & L Boyce	J Brackenrig	
<b>Commentator</b>		L Gorczyca	G Cattermole		H Rapp	
<b>Readers</b>	S Hartcher J Stafa	M Ingold	E Thomas J Tindale	R James J Bray	H Rapp O Brackenrig C Brackenrig	
<b>Prayers</b>		L Gorczyca	J Cox	M Dagg	K Stuart	2 Welcomers are required each week.
<b>Offertory</b>	K Jones K Jones	J Gorczyca	J Walker H Standing	M Petrie		
<b>Extraordinary Ministers of Communion</b>						NO Ministers of Communion are required.

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.

**Weekly Mass Diary**

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>21 December</b> <i>St Peter Canisius</i>	<b>22 December</b>	<b>23 December</b> <i>St John of Kanty</i>	<b>24 December</b>	<b>25 December</b> <b>THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD (CHRISTMAS DAY)</b>	<b>26 December</b> <i>St Stephen, the first Martyr</i>	<b>27 December</b> <b>THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY &amp; JOSEPH, YEAR B</b>
8.00am Mass	6.00pm Mass St Patrick's Singleton	9.20am Mass St Patrick's Singleton	6.00pm Vigil Mass 8.00pm Vigil Mass 12.00am Midnight Mass St Patrick's Singleton	10.00am Mass St Patrick's Singleton	9.00am Novena 9.20am Mass 9.45am Reconciliation St Patrick's Singleton	7.00am Mass 10.00am Mass 6.00pm Mass St Patrick's Singleton
	9.20am Mass St Catherine's Greta		6.00pm Vigil Mass St Brigid's Branxton	8.00am Mass St Catherine's Greta	5.30pm Reconciliation 6.00pm Mass St Brigid's Branxton	8.00am 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 Parish Mass. If you are new members of 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.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians, the Wonnarua people, 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.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SURVIVORS OF ABUSE**

We acknowledge the lifelong trauma of abuse victims, survivors and their families, the failures of the Catholic Church to protect, believe and respond justly to children and vulnerable adults, and the consequent breach of trust.

## **Our Churches Are COVID Safe**

Our churches are registered COVID Safe businesses with NSW Health. A copy of the COVID-19 Safety Plan is on the noticeboard for you to read with our conditions of entry.

Please stay home and get tested if you are experiencing any of the following symptoms (even if they are mild):

- Fever (37.5° or higher)
- cough
- sore/scratchy throat
- shortness of breath
- loss of smell
- or loss of taste



**HAVE YOU CHECKED IN? Please ensure you have your name on the registration list or used the QR code to check-in today!**

## **Registering for Mass**

Please phone the Parish Office or email your name and contact phone number to register for Mass by 12pm Friday if you have not ticked that you are attending next week on the registration sheet at Mass. Sheets will be cleared in the new year.

## **God's Word daily Reflections 2021**

Designed to help you to keep the Word of God close to your heart in your daily life. A companion on the journey to pray, to share, to grow in God's love and be nourished by the Word of God. Includes the Bible readings set down for each day, with a reflection. \$15 per book – use envelope inside book to pay.

## **Reaching Beyond 2020**

People of all trades and professions are being requested by communities abroad seeking to build the capacity of their organisations and the skills of their people. Restrictions this year have made communities' needs acute, but your assistance will help to develop self-reliance and sustainable solutions to poverty. Palms Australia will provide you with thorough preparation to ensure your readiness as travel resumes, and support on assignment. See [www.palms.org.au](http://www.palms.org.au) and talk to Roger on 0431 995 058, or email [palms@palms.org.au](mailto:palms@palms.org.au)

## **St. Brigid's Caritas Christmas Message**

"From the fullness of His grace we have all received one blessing after another." John 1:16. Wishing you Peace and Joy at Christmas and celebrate the New Year with hope. The Ladies of St. Brigid's Caritas, Branxton

## **Caritas Global Gifts**

Looking for meaningful Christmas presents? Give a Global Gift. These cards will bring hope and joy to the world's most vulnerable and smiles to your loved ones. Go to <https://globalgifts.org.au/> to purchase.

## **Christmas Mass Times**

Anyone wishing to attend one of these Mass times will need to register by 12pm on Wednesday 23 December 2020. To register please phone the Parish Office on 5507 4048 or email [singleton.branxton@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:singleton.branxton@mn.catholic.org.au) with the names and contact numbers for all attending. Registration sheets will be available at Mass each week.

**St Brigid's Church Branxton** will have Vigil Mass at 6pm on Thursday 24 December.

**St Catherine's Church Greta** will have Mass at 8am on Christmas Day.

**St Patrick's Church Singleton** will have Vigil Mass at 6pm and 8pm, Midnight Mass at 12am and Mass on Christmas Day at 10am. Mass in Singleton will be live-streamed and those who don't fit in the church will be able to sit in the church yard and watch online or listen via the speakers. Communion will be offered from the doors for those outside.

Restrictions for religious services have been relaxed as of Monday 7 December, now allowing 1 person per 2m<sup>2</sup> doubling those allowed in the church. The table below shows how many spaces are left indoors at each Mass for Christmas.

<b>Singleton 6pm – FULL</b>	<b>Singleton 8pm – 91</b>
<b>Singleton Midnight – 102</b>	<b>Singleton 10am – 118</b>
<b>Branxton 6pm – 10</b>	<b>Greta 8am – 50</b>

## **Diocesan Synod – Delegate Nominations Called**

A Synod – *the word means "journeying together"* – is a formal assembly of representatives of the whole diocesan community: clergy, religious and lay people. Through the Synod process, which involves collaboration, discernment, governance and communion, the Bishop seeks advice on matters concerning the good of the whole diocese. Declarations and decrees are promulgated which set the direction for the diocese in the form of a Diocesan Pastoral Plan. So, Diocesan Synods are important instruments and occasions for effecting renewal. The Diocesan Synod (2019-2021), to be held in three sessions, invites the People of God to carefully discern together what the Spirit is saying to the Church of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle and to agree on common goals and actions for the coming years.

The Bishop is inviting you to consider nominating as a delegate to our 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> sessions of the diocesan synod. It is hoped to find a good mix of people from every part of the diocese, from every age group, from every diocesan ministry or lay group, from those associated with our schools or CatholicCare services, workers and participants, and from both those heavily involved in our church and those who still care about it but feel rather distant from it normally. Expressions of interest to nominate as a delegate close on 4 January 2021. **Please speak with Fr Thomas before completing the Expression of Interest form.** The Bishop warmly encourages you to consider nominating. **Every voice matters.** To find out about nominating visit the Synod website <https://www.domnsynod.com.au/get-involved/delegates/>



The Parish Office will be OPEN 22-24 December and 29-31 December from 9am-3pm each day.

The office will be CLOSED from 1-11 January 2021 – reopening on Tuesday 12 January at 9am. For any urgent matters while the office is closed please contact the Presbytery on 6578 9650.

Any items for the bulletins on 3 and 10 January need to be with the office by 12pm Wednesday 30 December 2020.

*I would like to thank you for your assistance throughout the year and wish everyone a happy and holy Christmas.*

## ATTENDING MASS IN OUR PARISH CHURCHES

Please see the noticeboard in each church for a full set of instructions which have been derived from a directive from the Office of the Bishop and will be in place to allow Public Mass to be celebrated in our Parishes, along with a copy of the COVID Safety Plan. We thank you for your assistance in complying with these conditions and in turn keeping our community safe and free from the spread of the COVID-19 virus. This notice can also be found on the Parish website [www.singletoncatholicparish.org.au](http://www.singletoncatholicparish.org.au) and the Parish Facebook Page 'Catholic Parishes of Singleton and Branxton'.

In accordance with the Public Health Order, public Mass, baptisms, funerals and weddings can be celebrated with a maximum of 160 people in St Patrick's Church, Singleton, 150 people St Brigid's Church, Branxton and 90 people in St Catherine's Church, Greta. Please ensure you have registered as you entered the church.

## Advent Wreath Prayers *Fourth Sunday of Advent*



The Presider, or an assistant, lights the fourth candle, which is often named the Angel Gabriel Candle for those messengers who bring God's Word into our world.

Presider: Lord Jesus, you established the house of David to be secure forever and from which the Saviour would be born (First Reading). Jesus is the cornerstone. We are a Christ-Centred Church.

All: **Come, Lord Jesus.**

Presider: Lord Jesus, you alone are wisdom and as St Paul declares, you will give us the strength to live the Gospel (Second Reading). By living a prayerful life centred on the Eucharist may we open ourselves to your wisdom and the Spirit working in the community of the Church.

All: **Come, Lord Jesus.**

Presider: Lord Jesus, you sent the angel Gabriel to give the good news to Mary so that she would bring Jesus into the world through the power of the Spirit (Gospel). Giving birth is painful. Change can be frightening. Mary trusted in God and let herself be led by the Holy Spirit so that we can say:

All: **Come, Lord Jesus.**

## Diocese COVID-19 Liturgy Reflections Survey

Last week saw the launch of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle **COVID-19 Liturgy Reflections Survey**. This is an important opportunity to voice your liturgical insights and experiences during COVID-19. What were the liturgical challenges and opportunities you experienced during COVID-19? To complete the survey click on the link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/mn-liturgy>

If you do not have access to a computer or the internet, phone Sharon Murphy on 4979 1134 for a hard copy.

For more information and details about the importance of the survey, go to Liturgy Matters

To complete the survey go to: [surveymonkey.com/r/mn-liturgy](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/mn-liturgy)

If you do not have access to a computer or the internet, phone Sharon Murphy on 4979 1134 for a hard copy.



The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle  
**COVID-19 Liturgy Reflections Survey is now live**



[www.mn.catholic.org.au](https://www.mn.catholic.org.au)

## Singing at Mass

Members of the congregation can join in singing during Mass, however, it is **recommended** that anyone over the age of 12 wear a mask while doing so. Singing during the celebration of Mass or other liturgies remains a high-risk activity, particularly when undertaken as a group or a community. Care should be exercised when singing occurs during Mass. Thank you for keeping our community safe and COVID-19 free.

## Let's Celebrate Fr Thomas Chirackal!

On Saturday 2 January 2021 Fr Thomas will celebrate 40 years since his ordination to the priesthood!

To celebrate you are invited to join him for dinner on **Saturday 2 January 2021 at Club Singleton, William St, Singleton (Bowling Club)** to celebrate this amazing milestone. If you wish to attend, place your name on the sheet at the back of the church by 24 December 2020 or phone the parish office, so we can book the tables required.