

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

Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) Day

25 December 2020

First Reading

Is 52:7-10

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

How beautiful on the mountains,
are the feet of one who brings good news,
who heralds peace, brings happiness,
proclaims salvation,
and tells Zion,
'Your God is king!'
Listen! Your watchmen raise their voices,
they shout for joy together,
for they see the Lord face to face,
as he returns to Zion.
Break into shouts of joy together,
you ruins of Jerusalem;
for the Lord is consoling his people,
redeeming Jerusalem.
The Lord bares his holy arm
in the sight of all the nations,
and all the ends of the earth shall see
the salvation of our God.
The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 97:1-6 R.v.3

**(R.) All the ends of the earth have seen
the saving power of God.**

Sing a new song to the Lord
for he has worked wonders.
His right hand and his holy arm
have brought salvation. **(R.)**

The Lord has made known his salvation;
has shown his justice to the nations.
He has remembered his truth and love
for the house of Israel. **(R.)**

All the ends of the earth have seen
the salvation of our God.
Shout to the Lord all the earth,
ring out your joy. **(R.)**

Sing psalms to the Lord with the harp,
with the sound of music.
With trumpets and the sound of the horn
acclaim the King, the Lord. **(R.)**

Second Reading

Heb 1:1-6

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

At various times in the past and in various
different ways, God spoke to our
ancestors through the prophets; but in our
own time, the last days, he has spoken to
us through his Son, the Son that he has
appointed to inherit everything and
through whom he made everything there
is. He is the radiant light of God's glory
and the perfect copy of his nature,
sustaining the universe by his powerful

command; and now that he has destroyed
the defilement of sin, he has gone to take
his place in heaven at the right hand of
divine Majesty. So he is now as far above
the angels as the title which he has
inherited is higher than their own name.
God has never said to any angel: You are
my Son, today I have become your father,
or: I will be a father to him and he a son to
me. Again, when he brings the First-born
into the world, he says: Let all the angels
of God worship him.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

A holy day has dawned upon us.

**Come you nations and adore the Lord,
Today a great light has come
upon the earth.**

Alleluia!

Gospel

Jn 1:1-18

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

In the beginning was the Word:
the Word was with God
and the Word was God.
He was with God in the beginning.
Through him all things came to be,
not one thing had its being but through
him.
All that came to be had life in him
and that life was the light of men,
a light that shines in the dark,
a light that darkness could not overpower.
The Word was the true light
that enlightens all men;
and he was coming into the world.
He was in the world
that had its being through him,
and the world did not know him.
He came to his own domain
and his own people did not accept him.
But to all who did accept him
he gave power to become children of God,
to all who believe in the name of him
who was born not out of human stock
or urge of the flesh or will of man
but of God himself.
The Word was made flesh,
he lived among us.
And we saw his glory,
the glory that is his as the only Son of the
Father, full of grace and truth.
The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.



REFLECTION

*The light of Christ shines brightly
among us in the liturgy of the Mass of
Christmas Day. The light has come
into the world shattering the
darkness. Now all the ends of the
earth can see the salvation of God.*

*Amidst all of the gift giving of
Christmas we must not forget to give
thanks for the wonders God has
worked on for us. Most wonderful is
God's willingness to become flesh –
to share our human condition – that
we may be raised up to share in God's
divine life.*

*Nor should we forget the smaller
wonders that have happened in our
lives over the past twelve months. We
recall those moments of grace and
blessing, often in the midst of
difficulty, when we realised that 'yes,
the Lord is dwelling among us'. For
such moments of light, we give thanks
on Christmas Day.*

Taken from 'God's Word Daily Reflections'
© St Pauls Publications 2020



ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:

A child is born for us, and a son is given to us; his sceptre of power rests upon his shoulder, and his name will be called Messenger of great counsel.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON:

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

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

Recently Deceased: Marie Pease. **May she rest in peace and light perpetual shine upon her.**

COPYRIGHT NOTICE

© The scriptural quotations are taken from the Jerusalem Bible, published and copyright 1966, 1967 and 1968 by Darton Longman and Todd Ltd and Doubleday & Co Inc, and used by permission of the publishers. The English translation of the Psalm Responses, the Alleluia and Gospel Verses, and the Lenten Gospel Acclamations, and the Titles, Summaries, and Conclusion of the Readings, from the Lectionary for Mass © 1997, 1981, 1968, International Committee on English in the Liturgy, Inc. All rights reserved. The prayers are from the English Translation of the Roman Missal © 2010 International Committee on English in the Liturgy Inc. (ICEL). All rights reserved.

Parish Contacts

Parish Priest	Fr Thomas Chirackal	Presbytery: 6578 9651	Email: Thomas.chirackal@mn.catholic.org.au
Assistant Priest	Fr Anthony Coloma	Presbytery: 6578 9650	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
Facebook	Catholic Parishes of Singleton and Branxton		singletonbranxton @parish_sb
PLEASE PHONE THE PARISH OFFICE FOR BOOKINGS OF PARISH CHURCHES (5507 4048)			
St Patrick's Parish			
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
PLEASE PHONE THE PARISH OFFICE FOR BOOKINGS OF PARISH CHURCHES (5507 4048)			
St Brigid's Parish			
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	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 Singleton	Director: Ms Saleena Rosee	Office: 02 4015 2860	Email: singleton@stnicholasmn.org.au
St Nicholas Early Education Branxton	Director: Ms Trudy McGovern	Office: 02 4931 1220	Email: branxton@stnicholasmn.org.au

Mass Roster Sunday 27 December 2020

	Branxton Saturday 6pm	Greta Sunday 8am	Singleton Sunday 7am	Singleton Sunday 10am	Singleton Sunday 6pm	Counters
Welcomer		D & J Clarke	J Walker C Crow	P & L Boyce	J Brackenrig	
Commentator		L Gorczyca	G Cattermole		H Rapp	
Readers	S Hartcher J Stafa	M Ingold	E Thomas J Tindale	R James J Bray	H Rapp O Brackenrig C Brackenrig	
Prayers		L Gorczyca	J Cox	M Dagg	K Stuart	2 Welcomers are required each week.
Offertory	K Jones K Jones	J Gorczyca	J Walker H Standing	M Petrie		
Extraordinary Ministers of Communion						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
21 December <i>St Peter Canisius</i>	22 December	23 December <i>St John of Kanty</i>	24 December	25 December THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD (CHRISTMAS DAY)	26 December <i>St Stephen, the first Martyr</i>	27 December THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH, YEAR 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. 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. 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, 15 people in St Brigid's Church, Branxton and 90 people in St Catherine's Church, Greta.

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!



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 my family and I wish everyone a happy and holy Christmas.

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

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.



Christmas Mass Collection

There will only be one collection at Christmas Masses. Please place your offerings in the basket at the back of the church as you enter. See the back page for how the Christmas Collection will be used in 2020.

St Vincent de Paul Christmas Collection - Greta

A bucket collection will be taken up for St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal on Sunday 3 January 2021 after 8am Mass.

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 2nd and 3rd 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/>

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 and talk to Roger on 0431 995 058, or email palms@palms.org.au

Let's Celebrate Fr Thomas Chirackal!

On Saturday 2 January 2021 Fr Thomas will celebrate 40 years since his ordination to the priesthood! Mass will be said at 9.20am on this day in St Patrick's Singleton to honour this occasion.

To further 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, please contact Frieda on 0411 047 616.



Peace on Earth ✨

2020 was a season of fierce disruption. It was intensely crazy and chaotic. Earlier in the year, we started choking from the fumes of the bush fire. Never did we realize that the insidious COVID-19 would almost suffocate us to death and bring about great anguish to us and to our loved ones. We wonder if we are genuinely excited for Christmas. Or, are we simply aching to go back and return to our normal lives.

Although Christmas 2020 is a different one from our past annual celebrations, it is fitting that we remind ourselves of the reason for the season. God entered and immersed the Godself in human history not to take away our pain and our sadness. God came and took human form to fill it with God's loving and healing presence.

Our faith reminds us that God has always longed to be with us – in our anxieties and in our dreams, in our fears and in our desires. Our sufferings will never end in futility. We will make that turn around but our hope is not based on the possibility that things will be better. Our hope is in Christ who has loved us and who will always be with us. We keep our minds, our hearts, our whole being focused on God. That same God who continues to whisper in our ears: "Do not be afraid; I am with you! And, I have loved you with an everlasting love!"

May God be with you and happy Christmas to all!

Fr. Thomas Chirackal, Parish Priest

Fr. Anthony Coloma, Assistant Priest

Catholic Parishes of Branxton-Greta and Singleton



2020 CHRISTMAS COLLECTION

Donations from this year's collection at our Christmas Masses will go to assisting the next **Hope Tree Group** project. Three children from Tanzania require assistance with their tuition fees and daily living costs. *Maria, Christoph and Claire* are all orphans who came into the care of the Franciscan Sisters.



Maria was found on the border of Burundi and Tanzania as a baby, where her and her mother had been beaten. Her mother passed away in hospital. She is now attending a Montessori English school and staying in the convent with the Sisters.



Christoph's mother was mentally ill and he was born on the streets. She passed away when he was 6 months old and was taken to live in the convent with the Sisters. He is now 15 and in Form One at St John Paul Secondary boarding school.

Claire's mother was also mentally ill and left her in the streets after her birth. She was taken to hospital by some good Samaritans and then she was taken into the care of the Sisters. She is now 6 years old and ready to start primary school at the Montessori English school.