

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

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

27 December 2020

First Reading

Sir 3:2-6, 12-14

A reading from the Book of Ecclesiasticus.

The Lord honours the father in his children,
and upholds the rights of a mother over her sons.

Whoever respects his father is atoning for his sins, he who honours his mother is like someone amassing a fortune.

Whoever respects his father will be happy with children of his own, he shall be heard on the day when he prays.

Long life comes to him who honours his father, he who sets his mother at ease is showing obedience to the Lord.

My son, support your father in his old age, do not grieve him during his life.

Even if his mind should fail, show him sympathy, do not despise him in your health and strength;

for kindness to a father shall not be forgotten but will serve as reparation for your sins.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 127:1-5. R. see v.1

(R.) Happy are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways.

O blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways!

By the labour of your hands you shall eat. You will be happy and prosper. **(R.)**

Your wife like a fruitful vine in the heart of your house;
your children like shoots of the olive, around your table. **(R.)**

Indeed thus shall be blessed the man who fears the Lord.
May the Lord bless you from Zion all the days of your life. **(R.)**

Second Reading

Col 3:12-21

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Colossians.

You are God's chosen race, his saints; he loves you and you should be clothed in sincere compassion, in kindness and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive each other as soon as a quarrel begins. The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same. Over all these clothes, to keep them together and complete them, put on love. And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you were called together as parts of one body. Always be thankful.

Let the message of Christ, in all its richness, find a home with you. Teach each other, and advise each other, in all wisdom. With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God; and never say or do anything except in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Wives, give way to your husbands, as you should in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and treat them with gentleness. Children, be obedient to your parents always, because that is what will please the Lord. Parents, never drive your children to resentment or you will make them feel frustrated.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Col 3:15, 16

Alleluia, alleluia!

May the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, and the fullness of his message live within you.

Alleluia!

Gospel

Mt 2:13-15, 19-23

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

After the wise men had left, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother with you, and escape into Egypt, and stay there until I tell you, because Herod intends to search for the child and do away with him.' So Joseph got up and, taking the child and his mother with him, left that night for Egypt, where he stayed until Herod was dead. This was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken through the prophet:

I called my son out of Egypt.
After Herod's death, the angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother with you and go back to the land of Israel, for those who wanted to kill the child are dead.' So Joseph got up and, taking the child and his mother with him, went back to the land of Israel. But when he learnt that Archelaus had succeeded his father Herod as ruler of Judaea he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he left for the region of Galilee. There he settled in a town called Nazareth. In this way the words spoken through the prophets were to be fulfilled:

He will be called a Nazarene.

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.



REFLECTION

by Fr Michael Tate

'The Liberation of Women'

In today's Gospel, Mary, having given birth, is regarded as ritually unclean. She could not take part in public worship until she was 'purified'. This involved offering up a couple of pigeons which she and Joseph had to buy.

No wonder that, at the Cleansing of the Temple, Jesus shatters the cages in which the pigeons were kept! He was angry with a Temple system which saw Mary that way, which thought of all women giving birth that way. Indeed, his whole ministry is full of instances when women breach religious and cultural taboos in his presence, because of his presence.

This Feast of the Holy Family gives us the opportunity to thank God for our mothers who, like Mary, helped fulfil God's plan for humankind by birthing us into the world.

We could pause for a moment to pray that the Church changes rules and structures which confine women in cages built from ideologies foreign to the Gospel, lest those rules become swords which pierce Mary's soul.

© Fr Michael Tate; mtate@bigpond.com

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ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:

The shepherds went in haste,
and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant
lying in a manger.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON:

Our God has appeared on the earth, and
lived among us.

NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURES

The Epiphany of the Lord, Year B

1st Reading: Is 60:1-6

2nd Reading: Eph 3:2-3, 5-6

Gospel: Mt 2:1-12



Prayer Requests

Sick: Bernadette Coffey, Bill Damstra, Janice Haines, Austin Hoffman, Helen Conlin, Marie Pease, 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: Pam Davy, Carol Cox, Boleslaw and Victoria Szumilas, Patty Paget. **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.**

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
		YouTube	
		Twitter	
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	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 3 January 2021

	Branxton Saturday 6pm	Greta Sunday 8am	Singleton Sunday 7am	Singleton Sunday 10am	Singleton Sunday 6pm	Counters
Welcomer	E Bendeich	D & J Clarke	J Walker C Crow	D Jarrett S Wheeler		
Commentator		D Clarke	G Cattermole	R Gee		
Readers	C Trunk C Szumilas	L Harrison	E Thomas J Tindale	R Price	A Borg J Borg C Davey	
Prayers		D Clarke	P Boyd	T Wells	K Davey	2 Welcomers are required each week.
Offertory	N Bendeich E Bendeich	P Bridge	G Cattermole			
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
28 December THE HOLY INNOCENTS, MARTYRS	29 December St Thomas Becket	30 December	31 December St Sylvester	1 January MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD	2 January St Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen	3 January THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD, YEAR B
8.00am Mass	6.00pm Mass St Patrick's Singleton	9.20am Mass St Patrick's Singleton	6.00pm Mass St Patrick's Singleton	9.20am Mass St Patrick's Singleton	9.00am Novena 9.20am Ordination Anniversary Mass St Patrick's Singleton	7.00am Mass 10.00am Mass 6.00pm Mass St Patrick's Singleton
	9.20am Mass St Catherine's Greta		9.20am Mass St Brigid's Branxton	9.20am Mass St Brigid's Branxton	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 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.

Mass for New Year's Day

Mass will be said at both Singleton and Branxton at 9.20am on Friday 1 January 2021 to welcome the New Year and celebrate the Feast of Mary, the Holy Mother of God.

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.

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.

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

Christian Formation Course 2021

The Christian Formation Course (CFC) is a face-to-face learning experience that allows participants to explore their life's journey and their faith within the Catholic Tradition. This one-year course introduces participants to scripture, theology, church history, sacramental life, and liturgy. The course runs across twelve months and comprises of eight units. Commencing on Tuesday February 2, 2021, no prerequisite formation or qualification is required to enrol. All who complete the Course are awarded a diocesan Certificate in Christian Formation.

If you would like to enrol in the Christian Formation Course in 2021 go to: <https://www.mn.catholic.org.au/church-mission/catholic-life/adult-faith-formation/christian-formation-course/>

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 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.

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

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Ritual

The ritual of purification referred to in today's passage would take place 40 days after childbirth. It was a ritual for the mother, not the child. Mary and Joseph took the opportunity of attending the Temple to bring Jesus into the presence of God who, according to tradition, dwelt in the Temple. The tradition associated with this purification of women after childbirth dictated that a lamb and a turtledove or pigeon be sacrificed. However, for the poor, an extra turtledove or pigeon could be substituted for the lamb. This fact gives us an indication of the status of Mary and Joseph.

SCRIPTURAL CONTEXT

Fulfilling prophecy

The writer of the gospel of Luke uses this presentation event to announce or forecast the ministry of Jesus. The explicit identification of the poverty of Mary and Joseph is an indicator of the emphasis that Jesus will give to the poor throughout his ministry. The gospel writer also makes plain the link between the Temple (the Jewish tradition) and the ministry of Jesus. Tying these events into the prophecies of both Simeon and Anna reinforce the prophetic nature of this whole episode. Jesus is portrayed in this gospel as the fulfilment of the prophecies of scripture.

LIVING THE GOSPEL

Faithful

A strong image that emerges from this passage is the faithfulness of Mary and Joseph. Their whole purpose in visiting the Temple is to fulfil the requirements of their faith. They are faithful to the Jewish tradition and it is into this tradition that they initiate Jesus. The faithfulness of Mary and Joseph is a hallmark of their life as a family. Their faithfulness is a significant element of what we celebrate in the feast of the Holy Family and their faithfulness to God and to one another is a model for all families and for all people.

An angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him to take Mary and Jesus to Egypt. Draw the angel speaking to Joseph in his dream.

