

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

Third Sunday of Lent, Year C

20 March 2022

First Reading Ex 3:1-8, 13-15
A reading from the book of Exodus.

Moses was looking after the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, priest of Midian. He led his flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in the shape of a flame of fire, coming from the middle of a bush. Moses looked; there was the bush blazing but it was not being burnt up. 'I must go and look at this strange sight,' Moses said, 'and see why the bush is not burnt.' Now the Lord saw him go forward to look, and God called to him from the middle of the bush. 'Moses, Moses!' he said. 'Here I am' he answered. 'Come no nearer' he said. 'Take off your shoes, for the place on which you stand is holy ground. I am the God of your father,' he said 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.' At this Moses covered his face, afraid to look at God. And the Lord said, 'I have seen the miserable state of my people in Egypt. I have heard their appeal to be free of their slave-drivers. Yes, I am well aware of their sufferings. I mean to deliver them out of the hands of the Egyptians and bring them up out of that land to a land rich and broad, a land where milk and honey flow.'

Then Moses said to God, 'I am to go, then, to the sons of Israel and say to them, "The God of your fathers has sent me to you." But if they ask me what his name is, what am I to tell them?' And God said to Moses, 'I Am who I Am. This' he added 'is what you must say to the sons of Israel: "The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you." This is my name for all time; by this name I shall be invoked for all generations to come.'

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm
Ps 102:1-4. 6-8. 11. R. v.8

(R.) The Lord is kind and merciful.

My soul, give thanks to the Lord,
all my being, bless his holy name.
My soul give thanks to the Lord
and never forget all his blessings. **(R.)**

It is he who forgives all your guilt,
who heals every one of your ills,
who redeems your life from the grave,
who crowns you with love and compassion. **(R.)**

The Lord does deeds of justice,
gives judgement for all who are oppressed.
He made known his ways to Moses
and his deeds to Israel's sons. **(R.)**

The Lord is compassion and love,
slow to anger and rich in mercy.
For as the heavens are high above the earth
so strong is his love for those who fear him. **(R.)**

Second Reading 1 Cor 10:1-6, 10-12
A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians.

I want to remind you how our fathers were all guided by a cloud above them and how they all passed through the sea. They were all baptised into Moses in this cloud and in this sea; all ate the same spiritual food and all drank the same spiritual drink, since they all drank from the spiritual rock that followed them as they went, and that rock was Christ. In spite of this, most of them failed to please God and their corpses littered the desert.

These things all happened as warnings for us, not to have the wicked lusts for forbidden things that they had. You must never complain: some of them did, and they were killed by the Destroyer.

All this happened to them as a warning and it was written down to be a lesson for us who are living at the end of the age. The man who thinks he is safe must be careful that he does not fall. The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation Mt 4:17

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

**Repent, says the Lord;
the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**

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

Gospel Lk 13:1-9

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Some people arrived and told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with that of their sacrifices. At this he said to them, 'Do you suppose these Galileans who suffered like that were greater sinners than any other Galileans? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen on whom the tower at Siloam fell and killed them? Do you suppose that they were more guilty than all the other people living in Jerusalem? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent you will all perish as they did.' He told this parable: 'A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came looking for fruit on it but found none. He said to the man who looked after the vineyard, "Look here, for three years now I have been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and finding none. Cut it down: why should it be taking up the ground?" "Sir," the man replied "leave it one more year and give me time to dig round it and manure it: it may bear fruit next year; if not, then you can cut it down."

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



REFLECTION

by Fr Michael Tate

Politics, Economics and the Gardener

There was a terrible disaster when a building fell down killing eighteen people. Some said, 'Oh, those killed must have been sinners, they or their parents.' Jesus repudiates that notion: 'No, it wasn't for anything they did.' It was clear to Jesus that they were the victims of poor construction and conditions at Siloam. Look at the builder.

Responsibility needs to be brought home to those who would otherwise hide behind a religious ideology, or the sheer self-interest of evading blame for a situation.

To identify those really responsible may well require major changes to the way society is organised.

Does it all seem too difficult? Jesus helps us with a metaphor:

You are like a fig tree which may not be bearing much fruit just now, but, I am a terrific gardener:

I will water you, dig around you, make sure you are well nourished so that you will bear the fruits I desire.

Our Lord does that by:

watering us with the waters of baptism;
pruning us, especially during Lent;
nourishing us with the bread of life in Holy Communion.

We might pause at various times during Lent to allow Our Lord to garden us so that he may create a heavenly botanical garden, a new Eden, of the whole of humanity.

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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

Fourth Sunday of Lent, Year C

1st Reading: Jos 5:9-12

2nd Reading: 2 Cor 5:17-21

Gospel: Lk 15:1-3, 11-32



Prayer Requests

Sick: Bernadette Coffey, Helen Conlin, Dey Cowan, Janice Haines, Leanne Hardy, Austin Hoffman, Greg Jervis, Ricky Love, Sr Mary Markham, Mick McCrone, John Ottery, David Patton, Irene Robinson, Amelia Verdera Santana, Arlo Spicer, Anne Standing, Lorraine Winter, John Thomas and Sharon Wood. **Bring healing, comfort, and peace to their bodies. Send strength to their carers.**

Recently Deceased: Michael (Mick) King. **May they rest in peace and light perpetual shine upon them.**

Anniversaries: Paul Dunn, Michael Markham, Gregory McShane, Br Clement (John Holz). **Having returned to the Father may they rest in peace.**

Baptism: Clancy Badior and Rafferty Walters (Singleton), Evie & Leo Firth (Branxton). **Called by name to be a child of God.**

Parish Contacts

Parish Priest	Rev Thomas Chirackal	Presbytery: 6578 9651	Email: Thomas.chirackal@mn.catholic.org.au
Deacon	Rev Omeiza Solomon Okovido	Presbytery: 6578 9650	Email: solomon.okovido@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		YouTube Twitter singletonbranxton @parish_sb
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 Ferne Owen	Office: 02 4015 2860	Email: singleton@stnicholasmn.org.au
St Nicholas Early Education Branxton	Director: Ms Natalie James	Office: 02 4931 1220	Email: branxton@stnicholasmn.org.au

MASS ROSTER - SUNDAY 27 MARCH 2022

	Branxton Saturday 6pm	Greta Sunday 8am	Singleton Sunday 7am	Singleton Sunday 10am	Singleton Sunday 6pm	Counters 9.30am Tuesday
Welcomer	E Bendeich	D & J Clarke	C Crow	J Dries		J Woolley R James (11.30am)
Commentator		L Harrison	G Cattermole		H Rapp	
Readers	P Conroy S Trunk	L Pozywio	H Ruigrok S Bates	R James	H Rapp C Brackenrig O Brackenrig	
Prayers		L Harrison	E Thomas			<i>Welcomers are required each week.</i>
Offertory	C & A Trunk	P Bridge				
Rosary Leader		D Clarke				

Faithful and compassionate God, your Spirit guides the Church and makes it holy; hear the prayers we offer, that in the ministry to which you have called us, may we serve you faithfully, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

WEEKLY MASS DIARY

Fr Thomas is available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation after Mass. Please speak with him before Mass.

Monday 21 March	Tuesday 22 March	Wednesday 23 March <i>St Turibius of Mogrovejo</i>	Thursday 24 March <i>St Oscar Romero</i>	Friday 25 March <i>THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD</i>	Saturday 26 March	Sunday 27 March <i>4TH SUNDAY OF LENT</i>
8.00am Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	6.00pm Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	9.20am Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	6.00pm Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	9.20am Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	9.00am Novena 9.20am Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	7.00am Mass 10.00am LOTW 6.00pm Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>
	8.50am Rosary 9.20am Mass <i>St Catherine's Greta</i>		9.20am LOTW <i>St Brigid's Branxton</i>		6.00pm LOTW <i>St Brigid's Branxton</i>	7.35am Rosary 8.15am Mass <i>St Catherine's Greta</i>

St Brigid, St Catherine, St Patrick, and St Paul – 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.

Staying Safe with COVID-19

NSW Health strongly advises people get fully vaccinated and wear a face mask where they cannot physically distance. Please continue to monitor for symptoms and if you are unwell, please stay home and take a rapid antigen test. If you test positive you must register your test result with Services NSW.

Visits to the Homebound

Those who are homebound and wish to be anointed or a clergy visit, please contact the Parish Office on 5507 4048.

Way of the Cross During Lent

The Way of the Cross will be held in St Brigid's Church Branxton after Thursday morning Mass and in St Patrick's Church Singleton after Friday morning Mass. All are welcome to attend in preparation for Easter.

2022 Parish Sacramental Programs

Expressions of interest are now being taken for Singleton and Branxton Parish children in year 3 or above, who have been baptised in the catholic church, and wish to receive the *Sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation and Holy Communion* this year. Please email the parish office with your child's name and a contact number and you will be sent details of the information session when it is available. Email singleton.branxton@mn.catholic.org.au

If your child is not baptised but they wish to take part in the program this year, please contact the Parish Office.

BRANXTON PARISH PROGRAM INFORMATION MEETING

30 March 2022, 5.30pm St Catherine's Church, Greta

Please bring a copy of your child's baptism certificate if they weren't baptised in Branxton or Singleton Parishes. If you don't have a copy you will need to contact the parish where they were baptised.

Silver and Golden Wedding Jubilees

Five years after the publication of Pope Francis' post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Amoris laetitia*, Pope Francis launched the year of "*Amoris Laetitia Family*". The celebration lasts from 19 March 2021 to 26 June 2022, the day of the X World Meeting of Families in Rome.

The Branxton and Singleton Parishes would like to honour those couples who are celebrating 25 or 50 years marriage during this period. Please contact the Parish office to register your interest.

The Parish Pastoral Councils will be hosting family events after Mass at Branxton on Saturday 25 June and in Singleton on Sunday 26 June. **Mark your diaries and watch the bulletin for more details!**

Maitland Central Clergy Fund – URGENT APPEAL

The COVID pandemic has brought great difficulties to parish life. Due to smaller congregations and difficulties in taking up the collections at Mass, the Central Clergy Fund (where the first collection is sent) is running low. Early in the pandemic the Fund was assisted by the JobKeeper payment, meaning payments for priests in the parishes could be maintained. The Fund totals for have dropped by over \$430,000 from 2018/19 to 2020/21. During the same period the collections in Branxton have dropped by \$18,000 and in Singleton by \$14,000. The situation is now urgent, and the Maitland Central Clergy Fund is asking parishioners to consider giving more to the First Collection at Mass or via direct debit.

Vinnies Flood Appeal

Many Australians need your help today. Your donation can provide:

- **Money for groceries, removing a major stress**
- **Clothing and essentials such as blankets and toiletries**
- **Support to recover, helping families to move back home and replace damaged furniture.**

Donate online today at <https://donate.vinnies.org.au/appeals-nsw/vinnies-nsw-flood-appeal>

Caritas Australia Ukraine Appeal



The escalating violence in Ukraine is rapidly becoming a dire humanitarian crisis. In a matter of days, over half a million people have been forced from their homes and at least 400 civilians have lost their lives. Our long-standing partner, Caritas Ukraine, is on the ground, supporting people in need during this unfolding humanitarian crisis.

Your urgent support today will help provide critical assistance including emergency shelter, food, clean water, transportation services, and psychological support to people affected by this crisis.

Donate today at www.caritas.org.au/ukraine or call 1800 024 413 toll free.

Marriage and Relationship Education

Pastoral Ministries offers a range of innovative, evidence based, award-winning marriage and relationship education programs that have been designed to enhance your relationship with your partner.

Before We Say I Do: Pre Marriage program

FOCUS: Facilitating Open Couple Communication Understanding & Study

Enhance: Couples program

Sessions are currently operating on Zoom. Booking is essential 3- 6 months prior to the wedding to secure placement in the Before We Say I Do program. For more information contact Marriage & Relationship Education, Pastoral Ministries

P: 02 4979 1370 | M: 0412 637 090 |

E: robyn.donnelly@mn.catholic.org.au

Prayer for the Appointment of Our New Bishop

Shepherding God

you reveal your way of unfailing love in the image of the Good Shepherd who seeks the lost, shows compassion knows and is known by the sheep and lays down his life for them.

We your people of Maitland-Newcastle are without a bishop to shepherd us.

We ask that your Holy Spirit who moves through this great south land, inspire the choice of our new Bishop, empower his 'yes' and open our hearts in hospitality and love.

We make this prayer through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help pray for us Mary MacKillop of the Cross pray for us.

Janice 44, is a proud Wagilak woman, a traditional dancer, living in a remote community in the Northern Territory. As elders grow older and pass away, she knows she must share her knowledge with the younger generation. However, the community faces multiple challenges, including a lack of jobs, limited educational opportunities, and socio-economic which can lead to young people becoming disconnected from culture.



With your help, Caritas Australia supports Djilpin Arts Aboriginal Corporation, which operates a centre for traditional and contemporary Aboriginal arts and culture, providing employment and generating income for local communities.

Please donate to Project Compassion 2022 and help provide employment and training for First Australians, allowing them to remain on country and keep their culture alive.

Together, we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow **For All Future Generations**. You can donate through Project Compassion donation boxes or by visiting lent.caritas.org.au, or by calling 1800 024 413



The Holy See

MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
FOR LENT 2022

"Let us not grow tired of doing good, for in due time we shall reap our harvest, if we do not give up. So then, while we have the opportunity, let us do good to all" (Gal 6:9-10)

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Lent is a favourable time for personal and community renewal, as it leads us to the paschal mystery of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. For our Lenten journey in 2022, we will do well to reflect on Saint Paul's exhortation to the Galatians: "Let us not grow tired of doing good, for in due time we shall reap our harvest, if we do not give up. So then, while we have the opportunity (*kairós*), let us do good to all" (Gal 6:9-10).

3. 'If we do not give up, we shall reap our harvest in due time'

Each year during Lent we are reminded that 'goodness, together with love, justice and solidarity, are not achieved once and for all; they have to be realized each day' (ibid., 11). Let us ask God to give us the patient perseverance of the farmer (cf. Jas 5:7), and to persevere in doing good, one step at a time. If we fall, let us stretch out our hand to the Father, who always lifts us up. If we are lost, if we are misled by the enticements of the evil one, let us not hesitate to return to God, who 'is generous in forgiving' (Is 55:7). In this season of conversion, sustained by God's grace and by the communion of the Church, let us not grow tired of doing good. The soil is prepared by fasting, watered by prayer and enriched by charity. Let us believe firmly that 'if we do not give up, we shall reap our harvest in due time' and that, with the gift of perseverance, we shall obtain what was promised (cf. Heb 10:36), for our salvation and the salvation of others (cf. 1 Tim 4:16). By cultivating fraternal love towards everyone, we are united to Christ, who gave his life for our sake (cf. 2 Cor 5:14-15), and we are granted a foretaste of the joy of the kingdom of heaven, when God will be 'all in all' (1 Cor 15:28).

May the Virgin Mary, who bore the Saviour in her womb and 'pondered all these things in her heart' (Lk 2:19), obtain for us the gift of patience. May she accompany us with her maternal presence, so that this season of conversion may bring forth fruits of eternal salvation.

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 11 November 2021, Memorial of Saint Martin, Bishop.

Francis