

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

Second Sunday of Lent, Year A

5 March 2023

First Reading

Gen 12:1-4

A reading from the book of Genesis

The Lord said to Abram, 'Leave your country, your family and your father's house, for the land I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name so famous that it will be used as a blessing.

'I will bless those who bless you:
I will curse those who slight you.
All the tribes of the earth
shall bless themselves by you.'

So Abram went as the Lord told him.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 32:4-5. 18-20. 22. R. v.22

*(R.) Lord, let your mercy be on us,
as we place our trust in you.*

The word of the Lord is faithful
and all his works to be trusted.
The Lord loves justice and right
and fills the earth with his love. **(R.)**

The Lord looks on those who revere him,
on those who hope in his love,
to rescue their souls from death,
to keep them alive in famine. **(R.)**

Our soul is waiting for the Lord.
The Lord is our help and our shield.
May your love be upon us, O Lord,
as we place all our hope in you. **(R.)**

Second Reading

2 Tm 1:8-10

A reading from the second letter of St Timothy

Sin entered the world through one man, and through sin death, and thus death has spread through the whole human race because everyone has sinned. Sin existed in the world long before the Law was given. There was no law and so no one could be accused of the sin of 'law-breaking', yet death reigned over all from Adam to Moses, even though their sin, unlike that of Adam, was not a matter of With me, bear the hardships for the sake of the Good News, relying on the power of God who has saved us and called us to be holy – not because of anything we ourselves have done but for his own purpose and by his own grace. This grace had already been granted to us, in Christ Jesus, before the

beginning of time, but it has only been revealed by the Appearing of our saviour Christ Jesus. He abolished death, and he has proclaimed life and immortality through the Good News.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Mt 17:5

**Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!
From the shining cloud
the Father's voice is heard:
this is my beloved Son, hear him.
Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!**

Gospel

Mt 17:1-9

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain where they could be alone. There in their presence he was transfigured; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became as white as the light. Suddenly Moses and Elijah appeared to them; they were talking with him. Then Peter spoke to Jesus. 'Lord,' he said 'it is wonderful for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.' He was still speaking when suddenly a bright cloud covered them with shadow, and from the cloud there came a voice which said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; he enjoys my favour. Listen to him.' When they heard this, the disciples fell on their faces, overcome with fear. But Jesus came up and touched them. 'Stand up,' he said 'do not be afraid.' And when they raised their eyes they saw no one but only Jesus.

As they came down from the mountain Jesus gave them this order. 'Tell no one about the vision until the Son of Man has risen from the dead.'

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



Transfigured Bodysouls

We have to get rid of the idea that the soul is a dot of energy in some hidden core of our body. In fact, the body is in the soul. There is no part of my body which is not immersed in my soul. It is my whole person, bodysoul, which needs to be saved. As Thomas Aquinas says: 'If only my soul is saved, I am not saved.'

Today's Gospel does not portray an out-of-body experience of religious ecstasy. Jesus' body was translucent, totally radiant with Divine Light. Further, this transfiguration was not a solitary experience for Jesus. Peter, James and John witnessed it precisely because it told them what our Heavenly Father desired as their destiny beyond martyrdom, if only they would listen to Jesus.

Heavenly salvation will involve my whole person, bodysoul, being transformed. But could a person, during their earthly existence, share in the transfiguration experience of Christ?

We could pause for a moment to 'Google' or otherwise get hold of my favourite story of a saint – St Seraphim of Sarov – and pray that we may share with his disciple the bodily experience of 'immeasurable wellbeing' – 'infinite joy in our hearts'.

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ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:

Of you my heart has spoken, Seek his face.
It is your face, O Lord, that I seek;
hide not your face from me.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON:

This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.

NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURES

Third Sunday of Lent, Year A

1st Reading: Ex 17:3-7

2nd Reading: Rom 5:1-2, 5-8

Gospel: Jn 4:5-42



Prayer Requests

Sick: Otis Cowburn, Cathy Dunn (Goulburn), Eleanor Gilfillan, Austin Hoffman, Mary-Rose Hopkins, Warren Markham, Harrison McLachlan, John Ottery, Jen Phillips, Peter Rouse, Gary Wills and Sharon Wood. **Bring healing, comfort, and peace to their bodies. Send strength to their carers.**

Anniversaries: Patricia Lynch, Ted Trunk and Joyce Ralston. **Having returned to the Father may they rest in peace.**

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

Baptisms: Cohen Morgan (Branxton) and Vincent Smolenaers (Singleton). **Called by name to be a child of God.**

Due to privacy laws, names of the sick and deceased can only be placed in the bulletin with the permission of the immediate family.

Parish Contacts

Parish Priest	Rev Thomas Chirackal	Presbytery: 6578 9651	Email: Thomas.chirackal@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	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
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 Madison Keevill	Office: 02 4015 2860	Email: singleton@stnicholasmn.org.au
St Nicholas Early Education Branxton	Director: Ms Tricia Ellerbeck	Office: 02 4931 1220	Email: branxton@stnicholasmn.org.au

MASS ROSTER - SUNDAY 12 MARCH 2023

	Branxton Saturday 6pm	Greta Sunday 8.15am	Singleton Sunday 7am	Singleton Sunday 10am	Singleton Sunday 6pm	Counters 9.30am Tuesday
Welcomer	E Bendeich	D & J Clarke	C Crow	J Dries	J Dries	
Commentator		L Gorczyca	G Cattermole		SCAE LEADER	
Readers	H Hartcher S Trunk	D Lerch	J Duldulao H Duldulao	M Stowe	T Janssen H Janssen N Janssen	
Prayers		L Gorczyca	P Boyd	F King	E Janssen	<i>Offertory procession and collections can commence again.</i>
Offertory	C & A Trunk	T Ernst	*Volunteer Needed	*Volunteer Needed	*Volunteer Needed	
Extraordinary Ministers		*Volunteer needed	*Volunteer needed	M Stowe		
Rosary Leader		C Miller				

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

Monday 6 March	Tuesday 7 March <i>Sts Perpetua & Felicity</i>	Wednesday 8 March <i>St John of God</i>	Thursday 9 March <i>St Frances of Rome</i>	Friday 10 March	Saturday 11 March	Sunday 12 March 3 RD SUNDAY IN LENT, YEAR A
8.00am LOTW St Patrick's Singleton	6.00pm LOTW St Patrick's Singleton	9.20am LOTW St Patrick's Singleton	6.00pm LOTW St Patrick's Singleton	9.20am LOTW St Patrick's Singleton	9.00am Novena 9.20am Mass St Patrick's Singleton	7.00am Mass 10.00am Mass 6.00pm SCAE St Patrick's Singleton
	NO MASS St Catherine's Greta		NO MASS St Brigid's Branxton		6.00pm Mass St Brigid's Branxton	7.35am Rosary 8.15am Mass St Catherine's Greta

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.

Parish Office Update

Many of you will have heard that Fr Thomas' brother, Joseph Chirackal, passed away last Sunday at the age of 89. Fr Thomas flew home to India to be with his family on Tuesday and he will return to Australia on Friday 10 March. During this time Fr John Tobin and Fr Bill Burston have kindly offered to say Mass on the weekends for us. Weekday Singleton mass (including Saturday morning) will be changed to lay-lead Liturgy of the Word services and Greta and Branxton weekday Mass will be cancelled. Thank you to Fr John for being with us during this time.

Lenten Reflection Program

The Diocesan Reflection program 'Finding Light Within the Darkness' will be used for this year's Lenten Reflection. Groups will start from Ash Wednesday **22 February 2023**. Copies of the program are available at each church. If you missed getting a copy, please contact the parish office.



Parish Sacramental Programs 2023

Information Meetings have been held in Singleton and Branxton for those interested in the Sacramental Program this year. If your child is interested in receiving the Sacraments of *Reconciliation*, *Confirmation* and *Holy Communion* and you were not able to get to the meeting, please contact the Parish Office on 5507 4048 ASAP. The sessions will begin this weekend for the children to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Branxton Parish Update

St Brigid's Church in Branxton will receive a fresh coat of paint internally from **6 March 2023** thanks to a generous bequest left to the parish. The contract for work was awarded to Topaz Dynamics Pty Ltd who will also strip back and re-paint the floor in the sacristy and install a handrail up to the altar.

St Patrick's Women's Guild Meeting

The next meeting of the Women's Guild will be held on **Wednesday 8 March 2023** at the home of Elaine Thomas 21 Henry Drive Singleton Heights commencing at 1.30pm. All are welcome and we would love to see you there.

Branxton Caritas Monthly Luncheon

All parishioners are invited for lunch on **Friday 17 March 2023** at 12pm at the Miller Park Hotel restaurant. Come along and join a great group of people sharing a meal and conversation. For more information and to book a seat please phone Mercia on 0447 819 889.

Caritas Middle East Emergency Appeal

Caritas Turkey and other Caritas agencies are responding to a series of powerful earthquakes in southeast Turkey and Syria, where thousands of lives have been lost already and the death toll increases by the hour.

Caritas Turkey are on the ground coordinating with local authorities and other organisations to see how they can best assist. Your generous support can help provide emergency relief to help families recover and rebuild from disaster. Visit www.caritas.org.au/donate/emergency-appeals/turkey-and-syria-earthquake/ or call 1800 024 413 toll free to provide much needed support to the Middle East by donating to our Middle East Emergency Appeal.

Project Compassion – Second Sunday of Lent



Tereesa is a Gamilaroi woman from Western Sydney who struggled with homelessness while raising her four children. Through the Baabayn Young Mums and Bubs Group, Tereesa was able to reconnect with her culture and create a better future for her children.



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 at the church, visit

<https://fundraise.projectcompassion.org.au/o/singleton-catholic-parish>
or Call 1800 024 413.



Mission: Change Their Lives – and Yours!

Communities in Africa, Asia or the Pacific are seeking Australians from a variety of professions and trades to share their skills with those who have less opportunity to develop their talents. Explore 35 positions by scanning the QR code below. On our website you can also see news including stories from those currently supported in Timor-Leste, Samoa, American Samoa and Thailand. Please enquire further about potential assignments for you or someone you know by ringing 02 9560 5333 or online at www.palms.org.au

Ecumenical Way of the Cross

This year, following over 55 years of local tradition, the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle will once again celebrate the Ecumenical Way of the Cross on the grounds of Toronto Parish, Kilaben Bay on the Fifth Sunday of Lent 26 March 2023.

Picking up the theme from this year's World Youth Day (WYD) – "Mary arose and went with haste" – we will join with Bishop Michael Kennedy as we experience the Way of the Cross through the eyes of Mary. We will journey with creative retellings of Mary's story as shared by women from across our Diocese and fellow Christian Churches. This prayerful experience will be supported by our school communities and local WYD pilgrims.

People will start gathering at St Joseph's Toronto from 2pm at the Community Centre. The event will start at 3pm, afternoon tea will be provided.

Calling All Singers!

If you are a singer and would like to join the choir for the Installation of Bishop-Elect Michael Kennedy on **Friday 17 March at 6.00pm** you must be available for no less than three rehearsals scheduled for Thursdays: 2, 9 and 16 March from 6.00–7.00pm in the Sacred Heart Cathedral. Register at <https://forms.office.com/r/6ADQMRu8zZ> or 4979 1134.



Message of the Holy Father Francis for Lent 2023

Lenten Penance and the Synodal Journey

Continued from last week's bulletin...

The disciples' experience on Mount Tabor was further enriched when, alongside the transfigured Jesus, Moses and Elijah appeared, signifying respectively the Law and the Prophets (cf. Mt 17:3). The newness of Christ is at the same time the fulfilment of the ancient covenant and promises; it is inseparable from God's history with his people and discloses its deeper meaning. In a similar way, the synodal journey is rooted in the Church's tradition and at the same time open to newness. Tradition is a source of inspiration for seeking new paths and for avoiding the opposed temptations of immobility and improvised experimentation.

The Lenten journey of penance and the journey of the Synod alike have as their goal a transfiguration, both personal and ecclesial. A transformation that, in both cases, has its model in the Transfiguration of Jesus and is achieved by the grace of his paschal mystery. So that this transfiguration may become a reality in us this year, I would like to propose two "paths" to follow in order to ascend the mountain together with Jesus and, with him, to attain the goal.

The first path has to do with the command that God the Father addresses to the disciples on Mount Tabor as they contemplate Jesus transfigured. The voice from the cloud says: "Listen to him" (Mt 17:5). The first proposal, then, is very clear: we need to listen to Jesus. Lent is a time of grace to the extent that we listen to him as he speaks to us. And how does he speak to us? First, in the word of God, which the Church offers us in the liturgy. May that word not fall on deaf ears; if we cannot always attend Mass, let us study its daily biblical readings, even with the help of the internet. In addition to the Scriptures, the Lord speaks to us through our brothers and sisters, especially in the faces and the stories of those who are in need. Let me say something else, which is quite important for the synodal process: listening to Christ often takes place in listening to our brothers and sisters in the Church. Such mutual listening in some phases is the primary goal, but it remains always indispensable in the method and style of a synodal Church.

On hearing the Father's voice, the disciples "fell prostrate and were very much afraid. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, 'Rise, and do not be afraid.' And when the disciples raised their eyes, they saw no one else but Jesus alone" (Mt 17:6-8). Here is the second proposal for this Lent: do not take refuge in a religiosity made up of extraordinary events and dramatic experiences, out of fear of facing reality and its daily struggles, its hardships and contradictions. The light that Jesus shows the disciples is an anticipation of Easter glory, and that must be the goal of our own journey, as we follow "him alone". Lent leads to Easter: the "retreat" is not an end in itself, but a means of preparing us to experience the Lord's passion and cross with faith, hope and love, and thus to arrive at the resurrection. Also on the synodal journey, when God gives us the grace of certain powerful experiences of communion, we should not imagine that we have arrived – for there too, the Lord repeats to us: "Rise, and do not be afraid". Let us go down, then, to the plain, and may the grace we have experienced strengthen us to be "artisans of synodality" in the ordinary life of our communities.

Dear brothers and sisters,

may the Holy Spirit inspire and sustain us this Lent in our ascent with Jesus, so that we may experience his divine splendour and thus, confirmed in faith, persevere in our journey together with him, glory of his people and light of the nations.

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 25 January, Feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul

FRANCIS

To read the Holy Father's full letter visit

<https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2023/02/17/230217c.html>