

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

Third Sunday of Lent, Year A

12 March 2023

First Reading

Ex 17:3-7

A reading from the book of Exodus

Tormented by thirst, the people complained against Moses. 'Why did you bring us out of Egypt?' they said. 'Was it so that I should die of thirst, my children too, and my cattle?' Moses appealed to the Lord. 'How am I to deal with this people?' he said. 'A little more and they will stone me!' The Lord said to Moses, 'Take with you some of the elders of Israel and move on to the forefront of the people; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the river, and go. I shall be standing before you there on the rock, at Horeb. You must strike the rock, and water will flow from it for the people to drink.' This is what Moses did, in the sight of the elders of Israel. The place was named Massah and Meribah because of the grumbling of the sons of Israel and because they put the Lord to the test by saying, 'Is the Lord with us, or not?'

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 94:1-2. 6-9. R. v.8

*(R.) If today you hear his voice,
harden not your hearts.*

Come, ring out our joy to the Lord;
hail the rock who saves us.
Let us come before him, giving thanks,
with songs let us hail the Lord. **(R.)**

Come in; let us bow and bend low;
let us kneel before the God who made us
for he is our God and we
the people who belong to his pasture,
the flock that is led by his hand. **(R.)**

O that today you would listen to his voice!
'Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,
as on that day at Massah in the desert
when your fathers put me to the test;
when they tried me, though they saw my
work.' **(R.)**

Second Reading

Rom 5:1-2, 5-8

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

Through our Lord Jesus Christ by faith we are judged righteous and at peace with God, since it is by faith and through Jesus that we have entered this state of grace in which we can boast about looking forward to God's glory. This hope is not deceptive, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given us. We were still helpless when at his appointed moment Christ died for sinful men. It is not easy to die even for a good man – though of

course for someone really worthy, a man might be prepared to die – but what proves that God loves us is that Christ died for us while we were still sinners.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation See Jn 4:42. 15

Glory to you, Word of God,

Lord Jesus Christ!

Lord, you are truly the Saviour of the world; give me living water, that I may never thirst again.

Glory to you, Word of God,

Lord Jesus Christ!

Gospel

Jn 4:5-15. 19-26. 39-42

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John (shorter form)

Jesus came to the Samaritan town called Sychar, near the land that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Jacob's well is there and Jesus, tired by the journey, sat straight down by the well. It was about the sixth hour. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink.' His disciples had gone into the town to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, 'What? You are a Jew and you ask me, a Samaritan, for a drink?' – Jews, in fact, do not associate with Samaritans. Jesus replied: 'If you only knew what God is offering and who it is that is saying to you:

Give me a drink, you would have been the one to ask, and he would have given you living water.'

'You have no bucket, sir,' she answered 'and the well is deep: how could you get this living water? Are you a greater man than our father Jacob who gave us this well and drank from it himself with his sons and his cattle?' Jesus replied:

'Whoever drinks this water will get thirsty again: but anyone who drinks the water that I shall give will never be thirsty again:

the water that I shall give will turn into a spring inside him, welling up to eternal life.'

'Sir,' said the woman, 'give me some of that water, so that I may never get thirsty and never have to come here again to draw water. I see you are a prophet, sir. Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, while you say that Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship.' Jesus said:

'Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know; for salvation comes from the Jews. But the hour will come – in fact it is here already – when true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth:

that is the kind of worshipper the Father wants. God is spirit, and those who worship must worship in spirit and truth.'

The woman said to him, 'I know that Messiah – that is, Christ – is coming; and when he comes he will tell us everything.' 'I who am speaking to you,' said Jesus 'I am he.'

Many Samaritans of that town had believed in him on the strength of the woman's testimony, so, when the Samaritans came up to him, they begged him to stay with them. He stayed for two days, and when he spoke to them many more came to believe; and they said to the woman, 'Now we no longer believe because of what you told us; we have heard him ourselves and we know that he really is the saviour of the world.'

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.



Our Sacred Site

The Jewish people worshipped at the Temple in Jerusalem. The Samaritans to the north worshipped on Mount Gerizem. But Jesus says to the woman of Samaria: 'Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem . . . true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.'

We do this by acknowledging Jesus Christ as our sacred site. Jesus is where God is to be found. In his earthly ministry this was around places like the well in Samaria. As Risen Lord, he is to be found in those in dire need, and in the Heavenly Bread. In both cases we need to incline the body as an act of worship: in the case of the needy, by doing something practical; in the case of the Heavenly Bread, by genuflecting, bowing, before the Blessed Sacrament. We could pause for a moment to reorientate ourselves to the Sacred Site who is the Risen Christ, acknowledging him as indeed the 'Saviour of the World'.

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 A

1st Reading: 1 Sm 16:1, 6-7, 10-13

2nd Reading: Eph 5:8-14

Gospel: Jn 9:1-41



Prayer Requests

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

Anniversaries: Anne Boyd, Paul Dunn, Ben Dyer, Barry Goodwin, Gregory McShane, Jane Stocks, Harold Thrift, Robert Winter. **Having returned to the Father may they rest in peace.**

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

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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 19 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	J Brackenrig (14/3)
Commentator		M Ingold	G Cattermole			
Readers	J Partridge C Szumilas	L Gorczyca	SCAE LEADER C Spiteri D Thompson	T Cochrane	Gresham Family	
Prayers		M Ingold	P Boyd		J & A Phillips	Offertory procession and collections can commence again.
Offertory	M Thomas D Thomas	J Gorczyca	*Volunteer Needed	*Volunteer Needed	J & A Phillips	
Extraordinary Ministers		*Volunteer needed	*Volunteer needed			
Rosary Leader		L Gorczyca				

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 13 March	Tuesday 14 March	Wednesday 15 March	Thursday 16 March	Friday 17 March ST PATRICK	Saturday 18 March St Cyril of Jerusalem	Sunday 19 March 4th SUNDAY IN LENT, YEAR A
8.00am Mass St Patrick's Singleton	6.00pm Mass St Patrick's Singleton	9.20am LOTW St Patrick's Singleton	6.00pm Mass St Patrick's Singleton	9.20am Mass St Patrick's Singleton 11.00am Mass Mercy Home	9.00am Novena 9.20am Mass St Patrick's Singleton	7.00am SCAE 10.00am Mass 6.00pm Mass St Patrick's Singleton
	8.50am Rosary 9.20am 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

Fr Thomas will be attending the Clergy Leadership Dinner on Tuesday 14 March, the Leadership Day and Priest and Principals Dinner on Wednesday 15 March and the Priest and Principals Day on Thursday 16 March. Mass will not be said on Tuesday evening in Singleton, Wednesday morning in Singleton or Thursday morning in Branxton.

The Parish Office will be OPEN Monday 13 March, CLOSED Friday 17 March and OPEN Monday 20 March for the whole week.

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

We hope all the children and their families have enjoyed the first sessions of formation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

The Bishop's Office has let us know that the Branxton Parish Confirmation will be on Friday 2 June at 6pm in St Brigid's Church. All families should have received an email from the Parish Office. If any Branxton-Greta program families have not received this email please contact the office to confirm we have the correct details for you.

A date for Singleton will be communicated soon – we are having to book two dates due to the large number of children in this year's program.

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.

Please take care when entering the Church during this time.

Senior Singles Lunch

The Senior Singles Group will meet for their monthly lunch on Tuesday 14 March at 12pm in the Albion Hotel Restaurant. All senior singles are welcome to come along for a chat over a meal.

Installation of Most Rev Michael Kennedy

The Liturgical Reception and Installation of Most Rev Michael Kennedy as the ninth Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle will take place on Friday 17 March 2023 at Sacred Heart Cathedral, Hamilton. Attendance is by ticket only and reservations closed 8 March. *May God guide, protect and bless Bishop Michael all the time. May God guide him as he leads his flock. Congratulations our new Bishop.*

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.



Catholic Mission 2023 Conference

If you strive for justice, peace, reconciliation and God's mission of love and mercy in Australia and globally, please join us for the Mission: one heart many voices conference, 3 - 5 May 2023, SMC Conference Centre, 66 Goulburn St, Sydney. Lead Act Now. Register now at <https://events.humanitix.com/mission-one-heart-many-voices-conference> Offering both professional and personal development opportunities, the conference will focus on themes of truth telling, reconciliation, encounter on the margins, inclusion, governance and synodality. Inspired by Jesus, the conference will challenge you to consider contemporary mission in light of Pope Francis' teaching, witness and vision of synodal leadership.

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.



Priscilla lives in the Hwange district in Zimbabwe with her husband, Charles, and their two grandsons. Climate change continues to bring unprecedented challenges for people living in the most vulnerable and remote communities in Zimbabwe.

With the support of Caritas Hwange, Priscilla learnt conservation farming skills to grow drought-resistant crops to support her family during the current food crisis. Priscilla was able to produce a bumper harvest in her first year of practicing conservation farming. Priscilla used the funds from her harvest to start poultry farming, which enabled her to sell eggs to pay for her grandchildren's school fees, books and stationery. The poultry farming provides a safety net for Priscilla and her family during times of hardship, like the current drought.

While the situation in Zimbabwe and across eastern Africa remains dire, the work of Caritas Hwange means that Priscilla can learn the skills she needs to build resilience and support her family during this current food crisis

Together, we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow ***For All Future Generations.***

You can donate via

- Project Compassion donation boxes and envelopes at the church
- By visiting <https://fundraise.projectcompassion.org.au/o/singleton-catholic-parish>
- By calling 1800 024 413.



Why We Do

THE THINGS WE DO

Why do we take up two collections each Sunday?

The simplest answer is that, like any organisation, it costs money to run the Church: electricity, insurance, maintenance, wages, caring for those in need, projects for the spread of the Gospel, crisis appeals in the wider community.

But the church is more than an organisation, it is a community with a family-like character and thus operates as such. There are no membership fees. No one is excluded from church services because they can't pay. Rather, Catholics are asked to 'pitch in' according to their means.

The **First Collection** on Sunday is used by the Maitland Clergy Fund to sustain the Priests of our Diocese. The **Second Collection** is used for the work of the Catholic Church in our Parishes.

Unscramble the letters in the bucket to reveal who the Samaritan woman discovered Jesus to really be.



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