

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

Fourth Sunday of Lent, Year A

19 March 2023

First Reading 1 Sm 16:1,6-7,10-13
A reading from the first book of Samuel

The Lord said to Samuel, 'Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have chosen myself a king among his sons.' When Samuel arrived, he caught sight of Eliab and thought, 'Surely the Lord's anointed one stands there before him,' but the Lord said to Samuel, 'Take no notice of his appearance or his height for I have rejected him; God does not see as man sees; man looks at appearances but the Lord looks at the heart.' Jesse presented his seven sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, 'The Lord has not chosen these.' He then asked Jesse, 'Are these all the sons you have?' He answered, 'There is still one left, the youngest; he is out looking after the sheep.' Then Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send for him; we will not sit down to eat until he comes.' Jesse had him sent for, a boy of fresh complexion, with fine eyes and pleasant bearing. The Lord said, 'Come, anoint him, for this is the one.' At this, Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him where he stood with his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord seized on David and stayed with him from that day on.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 22. R. v.1
(R.) The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green are the pastures
where he gives me repose.
Near restful waters he leads me,
to revive my drooping spirit. **(R.)**

He guides me along the right path;
he is true to his name.
If I should walk in the valley of darkness
no evil would I fear.
You are there with your crook and your staff;
with these you give me comfort. **(R.)**

You have prepared a banquet for me
In the sight of my foes.
My head you have anointed with oil;
my cup is overflowing. **(R.)**

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow
me all the days of my life.
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell
for ever and ever. **(R.)**

Second Reading Eph 5:8-14
A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

You were darkness once, but now you are light in the Lord; be like children of light, for the effects of the light are seen in complete goodness and right living and truth. Try to discover what the Lord wants of you, having nothing to do with the futile works of darkness but exposing them by contrast. The things which are done in secret are things that people are ashamed even to speak of; but anything exposed by the light will be illuminated and anything illuminated turns into light. That is why it is said:

Wake up from your sleep,
rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation Jn 8:12

Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!
I am the light of the world, says the Lord; whoever follows me will have the light of life.
Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

Gospel Jn 9:1, 6-9. 13-17, 34-38
A reading from the holy Gospel according to John (shorter form)

As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. He spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man and said to him, 'Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam' (a name that means 'sent'). So the blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored. His neighbours and people who earlier had seen him begging said, 'Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?' Some said, 'Yes, it is the same one.' Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.' The man himself said, 'I am the man.' They brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. It had been a sabbath day when Jesus made the paste and opened the man's eyes, so when the Pharisees asked him how he had come to see, he said, 'He put a paste on my eyes, and I washed, and I can see.' Then some of the Pharisees said, 'This man cannot be from God: he does not keep the sabbath.' Others said, 'How could a sinner produce signs like this?' And there was disagreement among them. So they spoke to the blind man again, 'What have you to say about him yourself, now that he

has opened your eyes?' 'He is a prophet' replied the man. 'Are you trying to teach us,' they replied 'and you a sinner through and through, since you were born!' And they drove him away. Jesus heard they had driven him away, and when he found him he said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' 'Sir,' the man replied 'tell me who he is so that I may believe in him.' Jesus said, 'You are looking at him; he is speaking to you.' The man said, 'Lord, I believe', and worshipped him.

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



Spittle and Mud

Our Lord, by the power of his word alone, could have healed the dis-ease of this man, blind since birth. Yet, he made a paste with spittle and put it over the eyes of the blind man. Just as God would have moistened the dust of the earth to shape the first human being, for the blind man, it was as though he had been created anew.

God rarely works by telepathy but has a preferred way of working through the elements of creation, especially in the Sacraments. So, with the Anointing of the Sick, pressing olive oil onto the forehead and hands of the sick or dying symbolises the Holy Spirit entering the very pores of the sick person, relieving that person of undue anxiety and giving strength for the next stage of life.

This sacrament is a formal ritual of healing by the Church. But there are a million informal ways, such as putting one's arm around someone who is lonely or unwell, which are sacramental to the world.

We could pause for a moment that we might go into the world like the man healed by Jesus, eyes wide open to see where we might exercise the healing power of the Lord of the Gospel.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:

Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her.
Be joyful, all who were in mourning;
exult and be satisfied at her consoling
breast.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON:

The Lord anointed my eyes:
I went, I washed,
I saw and I believed in God.

NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURES

Fifth Sunday of Lent, Year A

1st Reading: Ez 37:12-14

2nd Reading: Rom 8:8-11

Gospel: Jn 11:1-45



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: Ernie MacDonnell, Michael Markham, Dees O'Connor and Connie Ryan. **Having returned to the Father may they rest in peace.**

Baptisms: Edward Hartcher and Bonnie Mitchell (Branxton), Isabella Martin, Brooklyn Laut and Magnolia Lear. **Called by name to be a child of God.**

Welcome to the Church: Barney Arrowsmith, Evelina O'Nions and Leo O'Connell.

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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 9653	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
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
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 26 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	G McMillan
Commentator	SCAE LEADER	L Gorczyca	G Cattermole		H Rapp	
Readers	J Stafa S Stafa C Trunk	M Ingold	H Ruigrok S Bates	SCAE LEADER R James D Cantrall	H Rapp C Brackenrig O Brackenrig	
Prayers		L Gorczyca	E Thomas	F Cantrall	A Skardon	Offertory procession and collections can commence again.
Offertory		P Bridge	*Volunteer Needed		Skardon Family	
Extraordinary Ministers						
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

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
20 March <i>ST JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY</i>	21 March	22 March	23 March <i>St Turibius of Mogrovejo</i>	24 March	25 March <i>THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD</i>	19 February <i>5th SUNDAY OF LENT, YEAR A</i>
<u>8.00am</u> Mass St Patrick's Singleton	<u>6.00pm</u> Mass St Patrick's Singleton	<u>9.20am</u> LOTW St Patrick's Singleton	<u>6.00pm</u> Mass St Patrick's Singleton	<u>9.20am</u> Mass St Patrick's Singleton <u>6.00pm</u> Sacrament of Reconciliation	<u>9.00am Novena</u> <u>9.20am Mass</u> St Patrick's Singleton <u>6.00pm Mass</u> Glendonbrook	<u>7.00am</u> Mass <u>10.00am</u> SCAE Mass <u>6.00pm</u> St Patrick's Singleton
	<u>8.50am</u> Rosary <u>9.20am</u> Mass St Catherine's Greta		<u>9.20am</u> Mass St Brigid's Branxton		<u>6.00pm</u> SCAE St Brigid's Branxton	<u>7.35am</u> Rosary <u>8.15am</u> 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 Diocesan Consultor's Meeting next Wednesday 22 March so Mass will be replaced with Lay Lead Liturgy of the Word in Singleton that day. The Parish Office will be open Monday to Friday next week.

2023 Lenten Reflection: Finding Light within the Darkness

Pastoral Ministries has prepared a Lenten resource for our diocese, *Finding Light within the Darkness*. Every Lent there is a fresh invitation to retreat from the noise and busyness of daily life. To listen with our heart, to contemplate our humanness so we can actively focus on humanity. We are invited to turn to God dwelling within us and consider how we can find light in the darkness and how we can be light to others. This resource provides opportunities for prayer, faith-sharing, and outreach in our local community. To access this resource, go to: <https://www.mn.catholic.org.au/church-mission/catholic-life/liturgy/lent-2023/>



Parish Sacramental Programs 2023

Please keep the children of the Parish Sacramental Programs in your prayers as they complete their final preparations before receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time in Singleton on Friday 24 March and Branxton on Wednesday 29 March.

Dates for Confirmation have now been received from the Bishop's Office. The Sacrament of Confirmation will be conferred in Branxton Parish on Friday 2 June and in Singleton on Friday 9 June at 6pm. All families involved in the program should have received this information via email. Please contact the office if you have not received an email.

Bishop Visit to Singleton Parish

Singleton Parishioners are encouraged to mark their diaries for a visit from Bishop Michael Kennedy over the weekend of 9/10/11 June 2023. There will be opportunities to meet with Bishop Michael over the weekend, so stay tuned for more details. A date for Branxton Parish will be set later in the year.

Bibles Available

Hard cover Good News Bibles are available for purchase from the Parish Office for \$25 each. If you wish to purchase, please come to the office or give Erica a call to order. These bibles make an ideal gift for Confirmation or First Holy Communion.

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.

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.

Chrism Mass

This year's Chrism Mass will take place on Tuesday 4 April at 7pm in Sacred Heart Cathedral, Newcastle West. This is the first opportunity for all who wish to gather, to celebrate with our new Bishop Michael Kennedy at Mass and light supper. All welcome. More information at <https://tinyurl.com/chrism2023>



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. The event offers a unique opportunity to listen, converse and experience the many and diverse voices that are an expression of the one heart of mission. Above all, the conference is a time to read the signs of the time with an aim of affirming what we do well, nurturing our growth and rethink and reformulate how we effectively live and lead mission today and tomorrow. Register at <https://events.humanitix.com/mission-one-heart-many-voices-conference>

Aurora Magazine Out Now!

Grab a copy of this quarter's Aurora Magazine from the church. *Aurora* aims to share the stories of the people in our community, offer a Catholic perspective on current issues and events, encourage opportunities for stillness, reflection, celebration, prayer and issues an invitation to all to participate in the local church.

If you miss a copy, you can catch-up online with all the news at <https://www.mn.catholic.org.au/news-events/aurora/>



Thu lives in Vietnam. When Thu was 12 years old, he stepped on an unexploded land mine and lost his leg.

Living with a disability in rural Vietnam presented many challenges for Thu, who worked mainly as a rice farmer. Thu also took on the role of caring for his wife, Linh, after she suffered a stroke.

Determined to turn their lives around, Thu and Linh joined the Empowerment of People with Disabilities program, run by Caritas Australia's local partner in Vietnam, the Centre for Sustainable Rural Development (SRD).

For Thu, the greatest impact the program has had is enabling the change in Linh's physical and mental wellbeing. With the support of a physiotherapist, Linh can now walk short distances with the aid of a walking stick.



Please donate to Project Compassion 2023

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 available from your church, by phoning 1800 024 413 or by visiting

<https://fundraise.projectcompassion.org.au/o/singleton-catholic-parish>

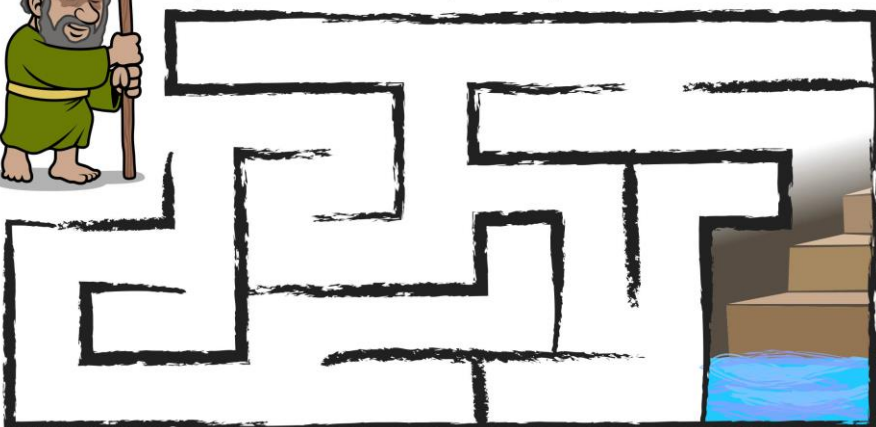


St Joseph, the husband of the Virgin Mary and adoptive father of Jesus, was a descendant of King David and a carpenter by trade. During his betrothal to Mary, he became distressed when he heard that she was with child, but an angelic vision reassured him that this was all part of God's plan. After Jesus' birth he was warned in a dream to flee with his family to Egypt, in order to escape from King Herod. Joseph showed great faith in his willingness to do whatever God asked of him. St Joseph is the patron saint of many causes including families, expectant mothers, workers, and people in doubt.

This year, we will celebrate the Feast of St Joseph on Monday 20 March.



Then Jesus told the blind man to wash himself in the Siloam pool.
Help the blind man find his way to Siloam pool.



When he met Jesus again, the man who had been blind put his faith in Jesus and worshiped him.
What can we do to show that we believe in Jesus?
