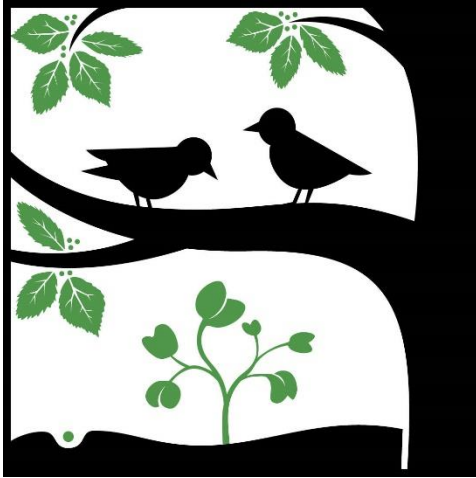




The Catholic Parishes of Branxton and Singleton are part of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle

16th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly 23 July 2023



First Reading Wis 12:13, 16-19
A reading from the book of Wisdom.

There is no god, other than you, who cares for everything, to whom you might have to prove that you never judged unjustly.

Your justice has its source in strength, your sovereignty over all makes you lenient to all. You show your strength when your sovereign power is questioned and you expose the insolence of those who know it; but, disposing of such strength, you are mild in judgement, you govern us with great lenience, for you have only to will, and your power is there.

By acting thus you have taught a lesson to your people how the virtuous man must be kindly to his fellow men, and you have given your sons the good hope that after sin you will grant repentance.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm
Ps 85:5-6. 9-10. 15-16. R. v.5

(R.) Lord, you are good and forgiving.

O Lord, you are good and forgiving,
full of love to all who call.
Give heed, O Lord, to my prayer
and attend to the sound of my voice. **(R.)**

All the nations shall come to adore you
and glorify your name, O Lord:
for you are great and do marvellous deeds,
you who alone are God. **(R.)**

But you, God of mercy and compassion,
slow to anger, O Lord,
abounding in love and truth,
turn and take pity on me. **(R.)**

Second Reading Rom 8:26-27
A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans.

The Spirit comes to help us in our weakness. For when we cannot choose words in order to pray properly, the Spirit himself expresses our plea in a way that could never be put into words, and God who knows everything in our hearts knows perfectly well what he means, and that the pleas of the saints expressed by the Spirit are according to the mind of God.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation
Alleluia, alleluia!
Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth; you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom.
Alleluia!

Gospel Mt 13:24-43
The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

Jesus put a parable before the crowds, 'The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. While everybody was asleep his enemy came, sowed darnel all among the wheat, and made off. When the new wheat sprouted and ripened, the darnel appeared as well. The owner's servants went to him and said, "Sir, was it not good seed that you sowed in your field? If so, where does the darnel come from?" "Some enemy has done this" he answered. And the servants said, "Do you want us to go and weed it out?" But he said, "No, because when you weed out the darnel you might pull up the wheat with it. Let them both grow till the harvest; and at harvest time I shall say to the reapers: First collect the darnel and tie it in bundles to be burnt, then gather the wheat into my barn."

He put another parable before them, 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the biggest shrub of all and becomes a tree so that the birds of the air come and shelter in its branches.'
He told them another parable, 'The kingdom of heaven is like the yeast a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour till it was leavened all through.'

In all this Jesus spoke to the crowds in parables; indeed, he would never speak to them except in parables. This was to fulfill the prophecy:

I will speak to you in parables
and expound things hidden since the
foundation of the world.

Then, leaving the crowds, he went to the house; and his disciples came to him and said, 'Explain the parable about the darnel in the field to us.' He said in reply, 'The sower of the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world; the good seed is the subjects of the kingdom; the darnel, the subjects of the evil one; the enemy who sowed them, the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; the reapers are the angels. Well then, just as the darnel is gathered up and burnt in the fire, so it will be at the end of time. The Son of Man will send his angels and they will gather out of his kingdom all things that provoke offences and all who do evil, and throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth. Then the virtuous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Listen, anyone who has ears!'

The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

REFLECTION BY FR MICHAEL TATE

When words fail

One loves someone so much – a child, a parent, a spouse or partner – yet when one tries to pray for that person the words seem only a pale shadow of the intensity of feeling and total love one feels. Stop! Simply put the person or situation before God and say nothing. The Holy Spirit will express our heartfelt prayer for us.

One's heart is breaking with grief for someone close who is very ill or dying. Or one feels a terrible anxiety or anguish. Words don't come easily even though one wants to pray. Stop! Put the person or situation before God and say nothing. The Holy Spirit will express our heartfelt prayer for us.

Perhaps accentuated by the constant messaging of social media, when trying to pray we can get anxious when there is a lull in the noise and no words come.

We could pause for a moment to relax and to allow the Spirit to express our plea in a way which could never be put into words.

© Fr Michael Tate; mtate@bigpond.com

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ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:
See, I have God for my help. The Lord sustains my soul. I will sacrifice to you with willing heart, and praise your name, O Lord, for it is good.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON:
The Lord, the gracious, the merciful, has made a memorial of his wonders; he gives food to those who fear him.

NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURES
17th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A
1st Reading: 1 Kgs 3:5, 7-12
2nd Reading: Rom 8:28-30
Gospel: Mt 13:44-52

MYSTERY OF FAITH
When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.

Prayer Requests

Sick: Ron Brady, Phuong Ho, Austin Hoffman, Warren Markham, Harrison McLachlan, John Ottery, Jen Phillips, Allan Thomas, and Sharon Wood. **Bring healing, comfort, and peace to their bodies. Send strength to their carers.**

Anniversaries: Colin Crow, Adrian Klasen, Margaretha Klasen. **Having returned to the Father, may they rest in peace.**

Due to Privacy Laws, names of the sick and deceased can only be put 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	Promoters of Safeguarding Contact via the Parish Office	Singleton Parish: Niamh Marzol Branxton Parish: Lydia Gorczyca
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: 0437 374 929
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: 02 5507 4048
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 Alex Stafford	Office: 02 4931 1220	Email: branxton@stnicholasmn.org.au

MASS ROSTER – SUNDAY 30 JULY 2023

	Branxton Saturday 6pm	Greta Sunday 8am	Singleton Sunday 7am	Singleton Sunday 10am	Singleton Sunday 5pm	Counters 9.30am Tuesday
Welcomer	E Bendeich	D & J Clarke	C Crow	J Dries		J Woolley G McMillan
Commentator		L Harrison	G Cattermole		E Janssen	
Readers	P Conroy M Thomas	D Lerch	P Boyd	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	T Janssen H Janssen N Janssen	
Prayers		L Harrison	P Boyd	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	E Janssen	<i>Welcomers are required each week.</i>
Offertory	C & A Trunk	C Miller A Humphreys	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	VOLUNTEER NEEDED		
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
24 July <i>St Sharbel Makhluf</i>	25 July <i>ST JAMES, APOSTLE</i>	26 July <i>Sts Joachim & Ann</i>	27 July	28 July	29 July <i>Sts Martha, Mary & Lazarus</i>	30 July <i>17th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A</i>
OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE CLOSED	OFFICE OPEN		
8.00am Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	5.00pm Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	9.20am Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	5.00pm Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	9.20am Anointing Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i> 11.00am Mass <i>Mercy Home</i>	9.00am Novena Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	7.00am Mass 10.00am Mass 5.00pm SCAE <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>
	9.20am Mass <i>St Catherine's Greta</i>		9.20am Mass <i>St Brigid's Branxton</i>		6.00pm SCAE <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, please contact the parish office for a Welcome Pack to be sent to you, complete and return the Member forms..

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.

SAFEGUARDING OUR CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle has an abiding commitment to promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults. Information brochures are available in the entrance to the church. If you have any concerns for a child or vulnerable adult, contact the Office of Safeguarding 02 49791390 or childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au or visit www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au for more information and resources.

Parish Office Hours

The Parish Office will be **OPEN** Monday-Wednesday and Friday, and **CLOSED** Thursday.

St Patrick's Church Adoration

Adoration of the blessed Eucharist will be held each Friday in July after Mass in St Patrick's Church, Singleton. All are invited to join.

St Brigid's Caritas Monthly Lunch

The next St Brigid's Caritas Group Lunch will be held on **Friday 11 August 2023** at 12.00pm in Miller Park Hotel. Members and non-members are most welcome. For more information phone Mercia Thomas 0447 819 889.

Local World Youth Day Pilgrimage

Are you 18-35? Would you like to celebrate World Youth Day with other young people in our diocese? Come and experience the historical and spiritual treasures of our diocesan story through a walking pilgrimage, taking in the beautiful communities and surrounds of Morpeth, Largs, and Maitland. We will start and finish our pilgrimage at St Joseph's Catholic Church, East Maitland. **When:** Sunday 6 August **Time:** 7.30am -7.30pm

Where: Meeting at St Joseph's East Maitland, transport will be available to leave from the Diocese at Newcastle-West. **Cost:** \$10 dollars (meals and transport included).

Registration is now open through Eventbrite: <https://LocalWYD.eventbrite.com.au?aff=oddttdtcreator>

The Good Oil 2023 Writers' Award

The Good Oil 2023 Writers' Award is an initiative of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan. The award aims to support and encourage the development of emerging and published writers aged 18 and over. The Good Oil's editorial vision is to nourish the spirit, stimulate thinking, promote social justice, and encourage reflection and dialogue about issues of the day from a Christian, Catholic, Good Samaritan perspective. The theme for this year's award is Finding My Voice. For more information about the award, to download the guidelines or to submit an entry go to <http://www.goodsams.org.au>

Overshadowed: Filled with the Power of the Holy Spirit

Join the MGL Sisters in a weekend retreat on **18-20 August** exploring what happens when we say yes to the Holy Spirit. Experience the life-changing power of deepening in God's love, surrendering to Jesus and living under the grace of the Holy Spirit. Venue: Carmel House, 345 St Andrews Rd, Varroville NSW Bookings: <http://www.trybooking.com/CFBOX> (by 11 August). **Contact:** Katherine - mgl sisters.sydney@gmail.com

Hiroshima Day Commemoration

A commemoration of Hiroshima Day will be held at Choral Evensong at 6pm on **Sunday 6 August 2023** at Christ Church Cathedral, Newcastle. The guest preachers on this special occasion will be the Rev'd Dr Erica Mathieson and Rev'd Dr Ray Williamson. People of all faiths are warmly invited to share in this annual service of commemoration as we remember those who have suffered as a result of war and join together in prayers for peace in the world. Contacts: George Garnsey 4934 2658 or Doug Hewitt 0431 935 097.

Workshops and Cathedral Lecture – Richard Lennan

We are excited that Father Richard Lennan will be visiting his hometown this **August**. He is offering several workshops and presentations. Join Richard in 'tilling' the Church for a more faithful, just, and creative church, one responsive to the movement of grace.

Tues 15: Workshop open to all diocesan community – The Church: Foundations, Challenges, and Possibilities- Maitland Gaol- 9.30am-3.30pm.

Wed 16: Cathedral Lecture open to all diocesan community – Shaping the Church's Future: The Grace of Creative Faithfulness- Sacred Heart Cathedral. 6.00pm-7.00pm.

Fri 18: Workshop open to all diocesan community – The Church: Foundations, Challenges, and Possibilities Forster Tuncurry Parish Hall. 9.30 am to 3.30pm. To register go to www.mn.catholic.org.au/church-mission/catholic-life/faith-formation/upcoming-events/

PRAYER FOR THE THIRD WORLD DAY FOR GRANDPARENTS AND THE ELDERLY 2023

Virgin Mary,
Mother of faith and hope,
an example for this humanity bent by indifference,
make me as willing as You
to accept the will of God,
to magnify and praise His Mercy.

Mary, Mother of fortitude,
you who knows my heart,
do not allow me to become discouraged.
I confidently surrender my life into your hands.
Heal my wounds.
May your tenderness accompany me on the way.

Your presence, Mother of love,
brings us to experience the joy
of seeing our families united.
Help me to transmit the tenderness and Love of God
to the grandchildren and youth
so that, in addition to praying for them,
we can pray with them.

Mary, may the gift of the Holy Spirit intercede for me:
sustain my weakness;
breathe into my heart the consolation
that I may leave traces of faith among the young,
bearing witness to the beauty of life,
knowing that life has a limit
and that beyond it lies before us our Father's embrace.

Amen.

Saints Joachim and Anne – Patron Saints of Grandparents



Joachim and Anne – parents of Mary, grandparents of Jesus – represent that entire quiet series of generations who faithfully perform their duties, practice their faith, and establish an atmosphere for the coming of the Messiah, but remain obscure.



World Day
for Grandparents
and the Elderly
2023

**MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
FOR THE THIRD WORLD DAY FOR GRANDPARENTS AND THE ELDERLY
23 JULY 2023**

Dear brothers and sisters!

“His mercy is from age to age” (Lk 1:50). This is the theme of the Third World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly, and it takes us back to the joyful meeting between the young Mary and her elderly relative Elizabeth (cf. Lk 1:39-56). Filled with the Holy Spirit, Elizabeth addressed the Mother of God with words that, millennia later, continue to echo in our daily prayer: “Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb” (v. 42). The Holy Spirit, who had earlier descended upon Mary, prompted her to respond with the *Magnificat*, in which she proclaimed that the Lord’s mercy is from generation to generation. That same Spirit blesses and accompanies every fruitful encounter between different generations: between grandparents and grandchildren, between young and old. God wants young people to bring joy to the hearts of the elderly, as Mary did to Elizabeth, and gain wisdom from their experiences. Yet, above all, the Lord wants us not to abandon the elderly or to push them to the margins of life, as tragically happens all too often in our time.

This year, the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly takes place close to World Youth Day. Both celebrations remind us of the “haste” (cf. v. 39) with which Mary set out to visit Elizabeth. In this way, they invite us to reflect on the bond that unites young and old. The Lord trusts that young people, through their relationships with the elderly, will realize that they are called to cultivate memory and recognize the beauty of being part of a much larger history. Friendship with an older person can help the young to see life not only in terms of the present and realize that not everything depends on them and their abilities. For the elderly, the presence of a young person in their lives can give them hope that their experience will not be lost and that their dreams can find fulfilment. Mary’s visit to Elizabeth and their shared awareness that the Lord’s mercy is from generation to generation remind us that, alone, we cannot move forward, much less save ourselves, and that God’s presence and activity are always part of something greater, the history of a people. Mary herself said this in the *Magnificat*, as she rejoiced in God, who, in fidelity to the promise he had made to Abraham, had worked new and unexpected wonders (cf. vv. 51-55).

To better appreciate God’s way of acting, let us remember that our life is meant to be lived to the full, and that our greatest hopes and dreams are not achieved instantly but through a process of growth and maturation, in dialogue and in relationship with others. Those who focus only on the here and now, on money and possessions, on “having it all now”, are blind to the way God works. His loving plan spans past, present and future; it embraces and connects the generations. It is greater than we are, yet includes each of us and calls us at every moment to keep pressing forward. For the young, this means being ready to break free from the fleeting present in which virtual reality can entrap us, preventing us from doing something productive. For the elderly, it means not dwelling on the loss of physical strength and thinking with regret about missed opportunities. Let us all look ahead! And allow ourselves to be shaped by God’s grace, which from generation to generation frees us from inertia and from dwelling on the past! In the meeting between Mary and Elizabeth, between young and old, God points us towards the future that he is opening up before us. Indeed, Mary’s visit and Elizabeth’s greeting open our eyes to the dawn of salvation: in their embrace, God’s mercy quietly breaks into human history amid abundant joy. I encourage everyone to reflect on that meeting, to picture, like a snapshot, that embrace between the young Mother of God and the elderly mother of Saint John the Baptist, and to frame it in their minds and hearts as a radiant icon.

Next, I would invite you to make a concrete gesture that would include grandparents and the elderly. Let us not abandon them. Their presence in families and communities is a precious one, for it reminds us that we share the same heritage and are part of a people committed to preserving its roots. From the elderly we received the gift of belonging to God’s holy people. The Church, as well as society, needs them, for they entrust to the present the past that is needed to build the future. Let us honour them, neither depriving ourselves of their company nor depriving them of ours. May we never allow the elderly to be cast aside!

The World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly is meant to be a small but precious sign of hope for them and for the whole Church. I renew my invitation to everyone – dioceses, parishes, associations and communities – to celebrate this Day and to make it the occasion of a joyful and renewed encounter between young and old. To you, the young who are preparing to meet in Lisbon or to celebrate World Youth Day in your own countries, I would ask: before you set out on your journey, visit your grandparents or an elderly person who lives alone! Their prayers will protect you and you will carry in your heart the blessing of that encounter. I ask you, the elderly among us, to accompany by your prayers the young people about to celebrate World Youth Day. Those young people are God’s answer to your prayers, the fruits of all that you have sown, the sign that God does not abandon his people, but always rejuvenates them with the creativity of the Holy Spirit.

Dear grandparents, dear elderly brothers and sisters, may the blessing of the embrace between Mary and Elizabeth come upon you and fill your hearts with peace. With great affection, I give you my blessing. And I ask you, please, to pray for me.

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 31 May 2023, Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Franciscus