



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

First Sunday of Advent, Year B

3 December 2023

First Reading **Is 63:16-17, 64:1, 3-8**
A reading from the prophet Isaiah

You, Lord, yourself are our Father,
Our Redeemer is your ancient name.
Why, Lord, leave us to stray from your ways
and harden our hearts against fearing you?
Return, for the sake of your servants,
the tribes of your inheritance.
Oh, that you would tear the heavens open
and come down – at your Presence the
mountains would melt.
No ear has heard,
no eye has seen
any god but you act like this
for those who trust him.
You guide those who act with integrity
and keep your ways in mind.
You were angry when we were sinners;
we had long been rebels against you.
We were all like men unclean,
all that integrity of ours like filthy clothing.
We have all withered like leaves
and our sins blew us away like the wind.
No one invoked your name
or roused himself to catch hold of you.
For you hid your face from us
and gave us up to the power of our sins.
And yet, Lord, you are our Father;
we the clay, you the potter,
we are all the work of your hand.
The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm
Ps 79:2-3. 15-16. 18-19 R. v.4

**(R.) Lord, make us turn to you, let us see
your face and we shall be saved.**

O shepherd of Israel, hear us,
shine forth from your cherubim throne.
O Lord, rouse up your might,
O Lord, come to our help. **(R.)**

God of hosts, turn again, we implore,
look down from heaven and see.
Visit this vine and protect it,
the vine your right hand has planted. **(R.)**

May your hand be on the man you have
chosen,
the man you have given your strength.
And we shall never forsake you again:
give us life that we may call upon your
name. **(R.)**

Second Reading **1 Cor 1:3-9**
*A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the
Corinthians.*

May God our Father and the Lord Jesus
Christ send you grace and peace.

I never stop thanking God for all the graces
you have received through Jesus Christ. I
thank him that you have been enriched in
so many ways, especially in your teachers
and preachers; the witness to Christ has
indeed been strong among you so that you
will not be without any of the gifts of the
Spirit while you are waiting for our Lord
Jesus Christ to be revealed; and he will
keep you steady and without blame until
the last day, the day of our Lord Jesus
Christ, because God by calling you has
joined you to his Son, Jesus Christ; and
God is faithful.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation **Ps 84:8**

Alleluia, alleluia!
**Lord, show us your mercy and love,
and grant us your salvation.**
Alleluia!

Gospel **Mk 13:33-37**
*A reading from the holy Gospel according to
Mark.*

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Be on your
guard, stay awake, because you never
know when the time will come. It is like a
man travelling abroad: he has gone from
home, and left his servants in charge, each
with his own task; and he has told the
doorkeeper to stay awake. So stay awake,
because you do not know when the master
of the house is coming, evening, midnight,
cockcrow, dawn; if he comes unexpectedly,
he must not find you asleep. And what I say
to you I say to all: Stay awake!'

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



REFLECTION
BY FR MICHAEL TATE

Timely Living and the End of History

Our Lord portrays himself as the
Master who goes away on a journey. It
is certain that he will return, even if no-
one in his household knows exactly
when. That is our situation. What do we
do in anticipation?

Our Lord, the Master, indicates we
have a choice. We can close our eyes
and enter into the world of dreams
where we create our own fantasy
futures, or we can stay awake and alert
to do what Our Lord wants us to do: 'He
left his servants in charge, giving to
each his work.'

You and me – his servants – have a
particular role or work in and for this
phase of human history. A deep down
intuition, prompted by the Holy Spirit,
indicates what this is. We must be true
to this assignment.

We could take a moment to pray that,
when the Lord returns, we may hear:
'Come, good and faithful servant,
inherit the Kingdom prepared for you
since the foundation of the world.'

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The Nativity of the Lord

RECONCILIATION
Branxton Thurs 14 December after Mass
Singleton Thurs 14 December after Mass

CHRISTMAS VIGIL MASS
St Brigid's Branxton 6.00pm
St Patrick's Singleton 6.30pm

CHRISTMAS MIDNIGHT MASS
St Patrick's Singleton 12.00am

CHRISTMAS DAY MASS
St Catherine's Greta 8.00am
St Patrick's Singleton 10.00am



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ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:
To you, I lift up my soul, O my God. In you, I have trusted; let me not be put to shame. Nor let my enemies exult over me; and let none who hope in you be put to shame.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON:
The Lord will bestow his bounty, and our earth shall yield its increase.

NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURES
Second Sunday of Advent, Year B
1st Reading: Is 40:1-5, 9-11
2nd Reading: 2 Pt 3:8-14
Gospel: Mk 1:1-8

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: Lorraine Cooper, Phuong Ho, Ron Hebbe, Austin Hoffman, Warren Markham, Jen Phillips, Olga Roberts, Cecilia Rosenthal, Selene Maree Stanholm-Atkins, Patricia Wilson and Sharon Wood. **Bring healing, comfort, and peace to their bodies. Send strength to their carers.**

Anniversaries: Catherine Ernst, Josephine McShane, Nellie Phipps, John Spinks. **Having returned to the Father, may they rest in peace.**

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

Baptisms: Van Capararo, Noah Curnow and Vincent Curnow (Branxton). **Called by name to be a child of God.**

November Mass for Holy Souls: Munzenberger and Keegan families.

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	
Broke	<i>Immaculate Conception Catholic Church</i>	Wollombi Street, Broke	
Glendon Brook	<i>St. Paul's Catholic Church</i>	874 Glendonbrook Road, Glendon Brook	
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	
Greta	St Catherine's Catholic Church	Branxton Street, Greta 2334	

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 10 DECEMBER 2023

	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	SCAE LEADER	J Brackenrig
Commentator		L Gorczyca	G Cattermole	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	E Janssen	
Readers	M Thomas C Harvey	SCAE LEADER A Humphreys	J Duldulao H Duldulao	M Stowe	T Janssen H Janssen N Janssen	
Prayers		L Gorczyca	P Boyd	F King	E Janssen	
Offertory	J & S Stafa	J Nightingale N Ernst	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	VOLUNTEER NEEDED		
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	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
4 December <i>St John Damascene</i>	5 December	6 December <i>St Nicholas</i>	7 December <i>St Ambrose</i>	8 December IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY	9 December <i>St Juan Diego</i>	10 December SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR B
OFFICE CLOSED	OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE CLOSED		
<u>8.00am</u> Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	<u>6.00pm</u> Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	<u>9.20am</u> Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	<u>6.00pm</u> Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	<u>9.20am</u> Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	<u>9.00am</u> Novena <u>9.20am</u> Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	<u>7.00am</u> Mass <u>10.00am</u> Mass PARISH BBQ <u>6.00pm</u> SCAE <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>
	<u>9.20am</u> Mass <i>St Catherine's Greta</i>		<u>9.20am</u> Mass <i>St Brigid's Branxton</i>		<u>6.00pm</u> Mass <i>St Brigid's Branxton</i>	<u>7.35am</u> Rosary <u>8.15am</u> SCAE <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.

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 changes for the rest of the month:

OPEN Tues 5 Dec – Thurs 7 Dec

CLOSED Friday 8 Dec

OPEN Mon 11 Dec -to Fri 15 Dec

OPEN Tues 19 Dec -to Fri 22 Dec

CLOSED 25 Dec to 5 Jan (Bulletins for this period will be published on 22 December)

Preparing the Way – Reconciliation in Advent

Advent is a wonderful time to celebrate the reconciling love and the healing graces our Lord offers us. Like all religious experiences, it takes preparation. Reconciliation is what God does. Receiving it and celebrating it is what we do. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a most natural way to celebrate God's forgiveness and love. The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be offered at St Brigid's Branxton on Thursday 14 December after 9.20am Mass and St Patrick's Singleton on Thursday 14 December after 6pm Mass.

St Brigid's Caritas Monthly Luncheon

The St Brigid's Caritas Christmas lunch will be held on Friday 8 December from 12pm at Miller Park. Please bring along a gift for exchanging to the value of between \$10 and \$20. Please see Mercia for more details or contact the parish office.

St Patrick's Parish BBQ Lunch

To celebrate the end of 2023 and Christmas time, St Patrick's Parish will be hosting a BBQ Lunch after 10am Mass on Sunday 10 December. Meat, salads, and bread will be provided. Please bring a plate of sweets to share. Please place your name on the noticeboard sheet to RSVP by **6 December**.

Senior Singles Christmas Lunch

The Senior Singles group will meet for their Christmas Lunch on Tuesday 12 December at 12pm in the Albion Hotel Restaurant. Please bring along a gift to share to the value of \$10-\$15. Let your senior single friends know they can come along to enjoy a chat and comradery over a meal.

St Patrick's Women's Guild Meeting

The next meeting of the Women's Guild will be their Christmas Party and will be held on Wednesday 13 December 2023 with drinks from 11.30am in the home of Jennifer Tindale, 23 Oldknow Crescent Singleton Heights. Please enter via Wilcox Avenue. Attendees are asked to bring \$10 for lunch and a \$10 Christmas themed gift to exchange. All are welcome and we would love to see there.

St Catherine's College Year 6 Rite of Passage



Welcome to the St Catherine's Catholic College Year 6 students, their family, friends, and staff who are celebrating their Rite of Passage during Mass at St Patrick's Church this Sunday! We wish you the best of luck for your high school years!

"We should be shining lamps, giving light to all around us."
Catherine McAuley

Parish Bereavement Teams – Expression of Interests

Interested persons are invited to contact the Parish Office to submit an Expression of Interest for either the Singleton or Branxton Parish Bereavement Teams. Members of the Bereavement Teams tirelessly support and service people of our parish in their time of loss. They liaise with the Parish Funeral Directors when funeral arrangements are required. Ministers in the team will undertake the Stepping Stones formation program.

Donations for Christmas Decorations

If you would like to contribute to the decorating of the churches for Advent and Christmas, please leave your donation in an envelope with the collections marked "Christmas Decorations".

The Sign: 2023 Daily Advent and Christmas Reflections

Discover the profound spiritual journey of Advent and Christmas with **The Sign: Daily Advent and Christmas Reflections 2023** - a captivating 80-page book containing spiritually rich, yet accessible, daily reflections from the beginning of Advent (3 December 2023) through to the Baptism of the Lord (8 January 2024). Booklets are **\$5 each** payable using the envelope within the book.

2024 God's Word – Daily Reflections

Designed to help you to keep the Word of God close to your heart in your daily life. A companion on the journey to pray, to share, to grow in God's love and be nourished by the Word of God. Includes the Bible readings set down for each day, with a reflection. Limited copies are available at the Parish Office. Please bring \$15 cash for payment.

Christmas Offering Envelopes

Christmas Offering envelopes are available at each church and are also included in planned giving envelope sets. These offerings are sent to the Maitland Central Clergy Fund. Please place your offering on either collection plate at Mass.

Do you have the Mass App?

Whether you're at home or travelling, the Diocese's mobile app shows you Churches and Mass times near you. If you're looking to attend Christmas Mass in your Parish, or you're just not sure about upcoming Mass times near you, simply searching in the app by your location allows you to find service times in your area. You can download the app for free from the **Apple App Store** and **Google Play Store**. Just search for 'Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle' and click install on your mobile or tablet!

Caritas – Global Gifts Change Lives

Caritas Australia's Global Gifts Christmas cards are a great way to spread joy and hope this Christmas season and to make a life-changing impact. Each gift represents a donation that will support vulnerable communities to create a brighter future.

Order now to receive in time for Christmas at www.globalgifts.org.au





The Lighting of the Advent Candles

First Sunday of Advent: The Hope Candle

During the first week of Advent, we watch and pray, awaiting the Lord's coming.

As we enter the Church's new liturgical year, cycle B, the season of Advent reminds us that we can look forward to and prepare for the coming of Christ at Christmas. It is a season of so many things: of expectation, reflection, hope and trust. We are constantly in a state of expectation, always in advent, so much so that we can miss the present moment where, inevitably, God will be.

We have to wait, and Advent reminds us that we are waiting for God. How strange it is to think that in a way God also waits. He always waits for us to come to him for he never forces himself on us, and when we do come to him, he is delighted and will give us many graces.

Leader: We light the first candle, candle of **hope** to proclaim that God's light is coming into the world.

(Lighting of the first purple candle of Advent Wreath – The Hope Candle)

Leader: This week, we recall the hope we have in Christ. The prophets of Israel all spoke of the coming of Christ, of how a saviour would be born, a king in the line of David. They spoke of how he would rule the world wisely and bless all nations. Let us pray:

All: **Almighty God, we begin this Advent Season as an 'Advent People' – people of hope, ready to do your will. Let your blessing come upon us as we light this wreath. May it turn our hearts to you in the days ahead. Grant us the peace and joy we long for, as we await the coming of your Son with patient hearts. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.**



Hope Tree
Group

Project 14: Martha's Piggery

PROJECT TARGET: \$1800 AUD



Martha is a single mother who lives in the village of Tabora in Tanzania. Her mud brick house has a roof made of leaves and other materials, and it is in poor condition.

Martha has four children. One of her children, Monika, is severely disabled. She was born healthy in 2002, but after an illness she became disabled and has been bed ridden since. She is suffering from various illnesses and her medication expensive.

Martha cares for the son of her relative. Yohane is 11 years old, and his mother is unable to look after him as she is mentally ill. She roams in the village, begging for food and money.

Martha is finding it difficult to look after all the children and her disabled daughter. The only income Martha has is from work in others' fields. She grows maize and beans so that they have some food. Money to buy clothes, medicine etc comes from her work in the fields and it not enough to cover the expenses.

Marth is seeking help to start a piggery to augment her income and sustain her family.

The funds needed to build a shed for the pigs and to buy piglets would be around 2800000 Tanzanian Shillings that is \$1800 AUD. Thank you to those who have already helped raise \$1429.

LET'S MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO THE LIVES OF MARTHA AND MONIKA