



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

Second Sunday of Advent, Year B

10 December 2023

First Reading

Is 40:1-5, 9-11

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

'Console my people, console them'
says your God.
'Speak to the heart of Jerusalem
and call to her that her time of service is
ended, that her sin is atoned for,
that she has received from the hand of the
Lord double punishment for all her crimes.'
A voice cries, 'Prepare in the wilderness
a way for the Lord.
Make a straight highway for our God
across the desert.
Let every valley be filled in,
every mountain and hill be laid low,
let every cliff become a plain,
and the ridges a valley;
then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed
and all mankind shall see it;
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'
Go up on a high mountain,
joyful messenger to Zion.
Shout with a loud voice,
joyful messenger to Jerusalem.
Shout without fear,
say to the towns of Judah,
'Here is your God.'
Here is the Lord coming with power,
his arm subduing all things to him.
The prize of his victory is with him,
his trophies all go before him.
He is like a shepherd feeding his flock,
gathering lambs in his arms,
holding them against his breast
and leading to their rest the mother ewes.
The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 84:9-14. R. v.8

**(R.) Lord, let us see your kindness, and
grant us your salvation.**

I will hear what the Lord God has to say,
a voice that speaks of peace,
peace for his people.
His help is near for those who fear him
and his glory will dwell in our land. **(R.)**

Mercy and faithfulness have met;
justice and peace have embraced.
Faithfulness shall spring from the earth
and justice look down from heaven. **(R.)**

The Lord will make us prosper
and our earth shall yield its fruit.
Justice shall march before him
and peace shall follow his steps. **(R.)**

Second Reading

2 Pt 3:8-14

A reading from the second letter of St Peter.

There is one thing, my friends, that you must
never forget: that with the Lord, 'a day' can
mean a thousand years, and a thousand
years is like a day. The Lord is not being slow
to carry out his promises, as anybody else
might be called slow; but he is being patient
with you all, wanting nobody to be lost and
everybody to be brought to change his ways.
The Day of the Lord will come like a thief, and
then with a roar the sky will vanish, the
elements will catch fire and fall apart, the
earth and all that it contains will be burnt up.
Since everything is coming to an end like this,
you should be living holy and saintly lives
while you wait and long for the Day of God to
come, when the sky will dissolve in flames
and the elements melt in the heat. What we
are waiting for is what he promised: the new
heavens and new earth, the place where
righteousness will be at home. So then, my
friends, while you are waiting, do your best to
live lives without spot or stain so that he will
find you at peace.
The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Lk 3:4, 6

Alleluia, alleluia!

**Prepare the way of the Lord, make
straight his paths:
all people shall see the salvation of God.
Alleluia!**

Gospel

Mk 1:1-8

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to
Mark.*

The beginning of the Good News about Jesus
Christ, the Son of God. It is written in the book
of the prophet Isaiah:

Look, I am going to send my messenger
before you;
he will prepare your way.
A voice cries in the wilderness:
Prepare a way for the Lord,
make his paths straight,

and so it was that John the Baptist appeared
in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of
repentance for the forgiveness of sins. All
Judaea and all the people of Jerusalem made
their way to him, and as they were baptised
by him in the river Jordan they confessed
their sins. John wore a garment of camel-
skin, and he lived on locusts and wild honey.
In the course of his preaching he said,
'Someone is following me, someone who is
more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to
kneel down and undo the strap of his
sandals. I have baptised you with water, but
he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'

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



**REFLECTION
BY FR MICHAEL TATE**

Two Gospels

John immersed, baptised, his followers in
water, symbolising the washing away of the
sins of the past. But he could not empower
people by drenching them in the dynamic
life of God. John anticipates 'Someone'
(not named!) who does have the power to
inundate, baptise, people with the Holy
Spirit.

From the heading of St Mark's Gospel, we
know that that 'Someone' is 'Jesus Christ,
Son of God' who came to flood our lives
with that Divine Power which can effect a
completely new future for humanity.

That is why St Mark took the term 'gospel'
(good news) which was used on
inscriptions announcing an Emperor's
birth or victory, and used it to describe his
inspired rendering of the mission of Jesus
Christ, which was to inaugurate the
'Kingdom of God', overcoming the
pretensions of all Emperors of any kind
throughout history.

We could pause for a moment to thank
God for the Good News of our being
baptised with water in the 'Name of the
Father and of the Son and of the Holy
Spirit.'

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ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:
O people of Sion, behold, the Lord will come to save the nations, and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard in the joy of your heart.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON:
Jerusalem, arise and stand upon the heights, and behold the joy which comes to you from God.

NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURES
Third Sunday of Advent, Year B
1st Reading: Is 61:1-2, 10-11
2nd Reading: 1 Thes 5:16-24
Gospel: Jn 1:6-8, 19-28

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: Veronica Cox, Kathleen Markham, Ray Martin and Jack Tierney. **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	
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 17 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	J Dries	J Brackenrig
Commentator		L Gorczyca	G Cattermole	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	
Readers	P Conroy M Thomas	K Ingold	SCAE LEADER C Spiteri D Thompson	T Cochrane	Gresham Family	
Prayers		L Gorczyca	P Boyd		VOLUNTEER NEEDED	
Offertory	J & S Stafa	C Anderson L Harrison	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	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	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
11 December <i>St Damasus I</i>	12 December <i>Our Lady of Guadalupe</i>	13 December <i>St Lucy</i>	14 December <i>St John of the Cross</i>	15 December	16 December	17 December THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR B
OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE OPEN		
<u>8.00am</u> Mass 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> Mass <i>Followed by Reconciliation</i> St Patrick's Singleton	<u>9.20am</u> Mass St Patrick's Singleton <u>9.20am</u> Mass Mercy Home	<u>9.00am</u> Novena <u>9.20am</u> Mass St Patrick's Singleton	<u>7.00am</u> SCAE <u>10.00am</u> Mass <u>6.00pm</u> Mass St Patrick's Singleton
	<u>9.20am</u> Mass St Catherine's Greta		<u>9.20am</u> Mass <i>Followed by Reconciliation</i> St Brigid's Branxton		<u>6.00pm</u> Mass 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.

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 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.

Dinner for Fr Thomas' Birthday

Please join us for dinner on Monday 11 December at 6pm in the restaurant at Club Singleton to celebrate Fr Thomas's birthday.

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.

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 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





The Lighting of the Advent Candles

Second Sunday of Advent: The Peace Candle

**During the second week of Advent, we focus on John the Baptist's challenge:
Prepare the way of the Lord!**

Leader: We light the second candle to represent John the Baptist, who proclaims Jesus as the Messiah. This candle is the candle of **peace**, a sign that God's promises will be fulfilled in the birth of Jesus Christ - Prince of Peace

(Lighting of the second purple candle of Advent Wreath – The Peace Candle)

Leader: Peace is a gift that we must be prepared for. God gives us the gift of peace, when we turn to him in faith Let us pray:

All: **Lord God, may the light of this wreath be a sign of peace and tolerance to all people, who prepare for your coming. Let the truth of your Word lead us all toward your kingdom, for which we long. We ask it in the name of the one born in Bethlehem, Jesus our Lord. Amen.**



Spotlight on Safeguarding

Everyone has the right to feel safe and be treated with dignity and respect in their family, home and community.

What we do

The Ageing and Disability Commission is an independent agency of the NSW Government.

We promote the rights of older people and adults with disability to live free from abuse, neglect and exploitation in their family, home and community.

You can contact us for information, support or to make a report.



1800 628 221
(M-F, 9am-5pm)
adc.nsw.gov.au

What is abuse?

There are many types of abuse that can be experienced:



Financial abuse includes limiting access to a person's bank account, spending their money without permission, or abusing powers of attorney for financial gain.



Psychological abuse includes treating an adult like a child, stopping someone from making their own decisions, threatening or stopping someone from seeing their family and friends, or verbal abuse and bullying.



Physical abuse includes hitting, kicking or using another type of physical force to hurt, intimidate or control another person.



Neglect includes not providing basic items such as food, clothing or a safe place to live, or preventing another person from receiving medical or social support they need.



Sexual abuse includes sexual assault, inappropriate washing or handling of a person's body, enforcing nudity, or using sexually explicit language.



What is exploitation?

The most common type of exploitation is financial.

It includes taking advantage of a person for personal financial benefit, such as befriending an older person or adult with disability, and then taking advantage of them to receive assets such as a house, car or money.