

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

**Second Sunday of Lent, Year B**

**25 February 2024**

**First Reading Gen 22:1-2, 9-13, 15-18**

*A reading from the book of Genesis.*

God put Abraham to the test. 'Abraham, Abraham,' he called. 'Here I am,' he replied. 'Take your son,' God said 'your only child Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah. There you shall offer him as a burnt offering, on a mountain I will point out to you.'

When they arrived at the place God had pointed out to him, Abraham built an altar there, and arranged the wood. Then he bound his son Isaac and put him on the altar on top of the wood. Abraham stretched out his hand and seized the knife to kill his son.

But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven. 'Abraham, Abraham' he said. 'I am here' he replied. 'Do not raise your hand against the boy' the angel said. 'Do not harm him, for now I know you fear God. You have not refused me your son, your only son.' Then looking up, Abraham saw a ram caught by its horns in a bush. Abraham took the ram and offered it as a burnt offering in place of his son.

The angel of the Lord called Abraham a second time from heaven. 'I swear by my own self - it is the Lord who speaks - because you have done this, because you have not refused me your son, your only son, I will shower blessings on you, I will make your descendants as many as the stars of heaven and the grains of sand on the seashore. Your descendants shall gain possession of the gates of your enemies. All the nations of the earth shall bless themselves by your descendants, as a reward for your obedience.'

The Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

**Responsorial Psalm**

**Ps 115:10. 15-19. R. 114:9**

**(R.) I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living.**

I trusted, even when I said:  
'I am sorely afflicted.'

O precious in the eyes of the Lord  
is the death of his faithful. **(R.)**

Your servant, Lord, your servant am I;  
you have loosened my bonds.

A thanksgiving sacrifice I make:  
I will call on the Lord's name. **(R.)**

My vows to the Lord I will fulfil  
before all his people,  
in the courts of the house of the Lord,  
in your midst, O Jerusalem. **(R.)**

**Second Reading Romans 8:31-34**

*A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans.*

With God on our side who can be against us? Since God did not spare his own Son, but gave him up to benefit us all, we may be certain, after such a gift, that he will not refuse anything he can give. Could anyone accuse those that God has chosen? When God acquits, could anyone condemn? Could Christ Jesus? No! He not only died for us - he rose from the dead, and there at God's right hand he stands and pleads for us.

The Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel Acclamation Matthew 4:4**

**Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!  
From the shining cloud,  
the Father's voice is heard:  
this is my beloved Son, hear him.**

**Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!**

**Gospel Mark 9:2-10**

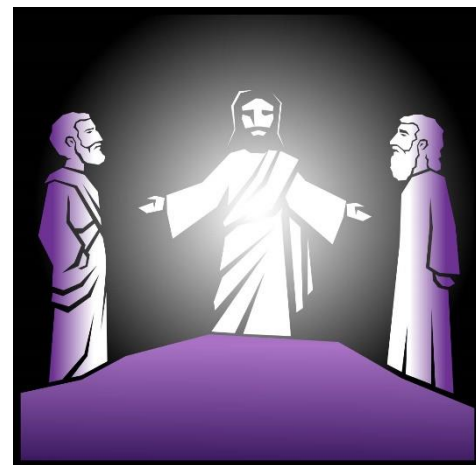
*A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark.*

Jesus took with him Peter and James and John and led them up a high mountain where they could be alone by themselves. There in their presence he was transfigured: his clothes became dazzlingly white, whiter than any earthly bleacher could make them. Elijah appeared to them with Moses; and they were talking with Jesus. Then Peter spoke to Jesus. 'Rabbi,' he said 'it is wonderful for us to be here; so let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.' He did not know what to say; they were so frightened. And a cloud came, covering them in shadow; and there came a voice from the cloud, 'This is my Son, the Beloved. Listen to him.' Then suddenly, when they looked round, they saw no one with them any more but only Jesus.

As they came down from the mountain he warned them to tell no one what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead. They observed the warning faithfully, though among themselves they discussed what 'rising from the dead' could mean.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**



**REFLECTION  
BY NICK BRODIE**

'We too are called to climb up the mountain,' says Pope Francis, like the chosen disciples. But, as he points out, we are also called to bring our experience back down the mountain.

In our own lives, one way of understanding this is to contemplate our personal spiritual behaviours. The Pope takes the opportunity of this Gospel to remind us to beware of the risk of 'spiritual laziness'. Are we tempted to 'remain on the mountain and enjoy the bliss of this encounter on our own'? Do we risk taking too much private and possessive comfort from 'our prayers and liturgies'?

As the Pope points out, we cannot stay on the mountain. 'Jesus himself brings us back to the valley, among our brothers and sisters and into daily life.' There is work to be done. It is not enough to come to Mass and posture and pray in a way that is cut off from life. The Church should never become a means of escaping reality or responsibility.

'We', the Pope proclaims, 'are called to experience the encounter with Christ so that, enlightened by his light, we might take it and make it shine everywhere.' Called up the mountain, we are sent down the mountain to go forth and take the mystery of the Transfigured One with us wherever we may go. We cannot do that if we keep our heads stuck in tents of our own making.

© Nick Brodie. **Nick Brodie** is an Australian historian and writer who is currently Dean of Academic Studies of Jane Franklin Hall in Hobart. A graduate of the Australian National University, Flinders University, and the University of Tasmania, he is the author of several books on Australian history and numerous essays on historical, political, and religious topics. In 2017 he was awarded the Bruce Mansfield Prize for the best article in the Journal of Religious History. He is currently studying Theology.

<b>ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:</b> Of you my heart has spoken, Seek his face. It is your face, O Lord, that I seek; hide not your face from me.
<b>COMMUNION ANTIPHON:</b> This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.
<b>NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURES</b> Third Sunday of Lent, Year B <b>1st Reading:</b> Exodus 20:1-17 <b>2nd Reading:</b> 1 Corinthians 1:22-25 <b>Gospel:</b> John 2:13-25
<b>MYSTERY OF FAITH</b> 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, Noel House, Warren Markham, Bob MacDonnell, Jen Phillips, Olga Roberts, Selene Maree Stanholm-Atkins and Sharon Wood. **Bring healing, comfort, and peace to their bodies. Send strength to their carers.**

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

**Anniversaries:** Pat Behringer, Eileen O'Brien and Victor Trunk. **Having returned to the Father, may they rest in peace.**

**Baptisms:** Elias Hughes, Hunter and Isla Walters (Greta). **Called by name to be a child of God.**

*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

<b>Parish Priest</b>	<b>Rev Thomas Chirackal</b>	Presbytery: 6578 9651	Email: <a href="mailto:Thomas.chirackal@mn.catholic.org.au">Thomas.chirackal@mn.catholic.org.au</a>
<b>Parish Secretary</b>	<b>Mrs Erica Janssen</b>	Parish Office: 02 5507 4048 (Tues-Fri, 9am-3pm) Unit 5, 16 Cambridge St, Singleton	Email: <a href="mailto:singleton.branxton@mn.catholic.org.au">singleton.branxton@mn.catholic.org.au</a> Web: <a href="http://www.singletoncatholicparish.org.au">www.singletoncatholicparish.org.au</a>
<b>Facebook</b>	Catholic Parishes of Singleton and Branxton	<b>Promoters of Safeguarding</b> Contact via the Parish Office	Singleton Parish: Niamh Marzol Branxton Parish: Lydia Gorczyca
<b>St Patrick's Parish PLEASE PHONE THE PARISH OFFICE FOR BOOKINGS OF PARISH CHURCHES (5507 4048)</b>			
<b>Singleton</b>	<i>St Patrick's Church</i>	Queen Street Singleton 2330	
<b>Broke</b>	<i>Immaculate Conception Catholic Church</i>	Wollombi Street, Broke	
<b>Glendon Brook</b>	<i>St. Paul's Catholic Church</i>	874 Glendonbrook Road, Glendon Brook	
<b>St Brigid's Parish PLEASE PHONE THE PARISH OFFICE FOR BOOKINGS OF PARISH CHURCHES (5507 4048)</b>			
<b>Branxton</b>	St Brigid's Catholic Church	Station St, Branxton 2335	
<b>Greta</b>	St Catherine's Catholic Church	Branxton Street, Greta 2334	
<b>Schools in our Parishes</b>			
<b>St. Catherine's Catholic College</b>	<b>Principal: Mrs Niamh Marzol</b>	K-12 Office: 02 6578 9600	Email: <a href="mailto:admin@singleton.catholic.edu.au">admin@singleton.catholic.edu.au</a>
<b>Rosary Park Catholic School</b>	<b>Principal: Miss Sallyanne Stanbridge</b>	K-6 Office: 02 4938 1541	Email: <a href="mailto:admin@branxton.mn.catholic.edu.au">admin@branxton.mn.catholic.edu.au</a>
<b>St Nicholas Early Education Singleton</b>	<b>Director: Ms Madison Keevill</b>	Office: 02 4015 2860	Email: <a href="mailto:singleton@stnicholasmn.org.au">singleton@stnicholasmn.org.au</a>
<b>St Nicholas Early Education Branxton</b>	<b>Director: Ms Alex Stafford</b>	Office: 02 4931 1220	Email: <a href="mailto:branxton@stnicholasmn.org.au">branxton@stnicholasmn.org.au</a>

## MASS ROSTER – SUNDAY 3 MARCH 2024

	<b>Branxton Saturday 6pm</b>	<b>Greta Sunday 8am</b>	<b>Singleton Sunday 7am</b>	<b>Singleton Sunday 10am</b>	<b>Singleton Sunday 6pm</b>	<b>Counters 9.30am Tuesday</b>
<b>Welcomer</b>	E Bendeich	D & J Clarke	<b>VOLUNTEER NEEDED</b>	J Dries	J Dries	J Woolley
<b>Commentator</b>		K Ingold				
<b>Readers</b>	P Conroy S Trunk	<b>SCAE LEADER REQ</b> L Gorczyca	E Thomas J Tindale	T Cochrane	P Goodwin A Borg	
<b>Prayers</b>		K Ingold	C Langford	<b>VOLUNTEER NEEDED</b>	M Cunningham	
<b>Offertory</b>	L Waters Family	C Anderson L Harrison		<b>VOLUNTEER NEEDED</b>	<b>VOLUNTEER NEEDED</b>	
<b>Rosary Leader</b>		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

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>
<b>26 February</b>	<b>27 February</b> <i>St Gregory</i>	<b>28 February</b>	<b>29 February</b>	<b>1 March</b>	<b>2 March</b>	<b>3 March</b> THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT, YEAR B
<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	<b>OFFICE OPEN</b>	<b>OFFICE OPEN</b>		
<u>8.00am</u> <b>Mass</b> <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	<u>6.00pm</u> <b>Mass</b> <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	<u>9.20am</u> <b>LOTW</b> <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	<u>6.00pm</u> <b>Mass</b> <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	<u>9.20am</u> <b>Mass</b> <b>Adoration and Benediction</b> <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	<u>9.00am</u> Novena <u>9.20am</u> Mass 1 <sup>st</sup> Anniversary <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	<u>7.00am</u> Mass <u>10.00m</u> Mass <u>6.00pm</u> Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>
	<u>9.20am</u> <b>Mass</b> <i>St Catherine's Greta</i>		<u>9.20am</u> <b>Mass</b> <i>St Brigid's Branxton</i>		<u>6.00pm</u> <b>Mass</b> <i>St Brigid's Branxton</i>	<u>7.35am</u> <b>Rosary</b> <u>8.15am</u> <b>SCAE</b> <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](mailto:childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au) or visit [www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au](http://www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au) for more information and resources.

## **2024 Sacramental Program**



Children aged in Year 3 or above who are interested in receiving the Sacraments of *Reconciliation, Confirmation and Holy Communion* are asked to contact the Parish Office. If your child wishes to be baptised as part of the program, please speak with the Team at the meeting. If you are unable to attend this meeting, please contact the Parish Office. The programs will commence in March.

## **World Day of Prayer 2024**

The 2024 World Day of Prayer will be held this coming Friday 1 March at 10am in St Brigid's Church, Branxton and at 7pm in St Patrick's Church, Singleton. This year's country of focus is Palestine. Attendees are asked to bring a plate. Everyone is invited to come along and spend time in prayer with the Christian communities of our parishes.

## **St Patrick's Parish First Anniversary Mass**

The 1st Anniversary Mass will be held on Saturday 2 March 2024 at 9.20am. We will be offering Mass for the souls of **Shirley (Bobbie) Stacey and Ina (Joey) Ingold** and all those who have anniversaries March.

You are also invited to join us to pray the Novena from 9am each week.

## **Lenten Reflection – Transformation through Revelation**

During the season of Lent, we are called to look deeply at the human condition, just as Jesus, the Son of God, experienced. We are reminded during this time of hardship, suffering, and ultimately dying that we must stretch ourselves. We must pray and fast from whatever is taking hold of the fullness of life.

A reflection group will be gathering on Wednesdays after Mass in Singleton. The Lenten Reflection books '*Transformation through Revelation*' found at the back of the church will be used. If you need a copy, please contact the Parish Office.

## **Way of the Cross**

You are invited to stay after Mass to pray the Stations of the Cross in Singleton on Friday mornings, in Branxton on Thursday mornings, and Greta on Tuesday mornings.

## **Way of the Cross**

Our Diocese is blessed with rich diversity. This year's Ecumenical Way of the Cross, held on the 5th Sunday of Lent, invites us into a multicultural journey of remembrance. As we relive the story of Jesus' Passion, we recall the stories that have brought us together. This event is a celebrated gathering of our wider community and one not to be missed and will be held on Sunday 17 March, 3pm (you are invited to gather from 2pm) at St Joseph's Toronto Church, 140 Wangi Road, Toronto.

## **Christian Initiation and Confirmation Review**

You are invited to take part in a review of the Ministry of Christian Initiation and the reflection on Confirmation. The review has been structured so that all parish ministers, parents, parishioners, sponsors and others can take part. Visit the link to find out more: <https://mnnews.today/liturgymatters/2024/57885-liturgymatters-it-s-time-christian-initiation-and-confirmation-review/>

## **Understanding the Beatitudes**

One of the most striking examples of Jesus' teaching is the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew's gospel. The Beatitudes are the foundation on which that sermon is built. They are also one of the most beautiful statements of Christian ethics. Yet at the same time, they are also some of the trickiest verses in the Bible to interpret. In this subject, we'll tackle the meaning of the blessings by putting them into the context of the gospels, the Hebrew Bible, and wider Jewish literature, like the Dead Sea Scrolls. We'll think about what the Beatitudes contribute to our understanding of Jesus' teaching and mission. And finally, we'll think about how the Beatitudes still matter today. Dates: Thursdays 7 & 14 March (4.00pm-5.30pm) in the Library in Diocesan Resource Centre.

Register at: <https://forms.office.com/r/cGXZ545eRX>

## **aMeN CaMiNo is on again!**

The aMeN caMiNo takes place over five consecutive days. The pilgrimage starts at St John's Chapel, Maitland and concludes at the Sacred Heart Cathedral, Hamilton. Pilgrims will walk an average of 20km per day through the beautiful landscape of bush, beach and beyond which we are blessed to have in our backyard. We will also be holding a weekend experience. It will be held on 6-10 July, 3-7 August and 7-8 September. See the noticeboard for more information.

## **Sisters of Faith Dinner**

The Ecumenical and Interfaith Council would like to invite you to join us for the Sisters of Faith Dinner to mark International Women's Day on Tuesday 5 March 6.30pm-9.30pm in the Victor Peters Suite (841 Hunter St, Newcastle West) at a cost of \$20. It is an opportunity for all women of faith to come together to form friendship. Please note that this is a women-only event, however we encourage you to share this invite with your wives, mothers, sisters, daughters and friends – all are welcome! Use this link to register <https://sistersoffaith2024.eventbrite.com.au>

## **St Joseph's College, Hunters Hill – Principals Visit**

St Joseph's College Headmaster, Mr Michael Blake, will be visiting Singleton on Thursday 29 February 2024 and he invites families of current, past and future students, Old Boys and families who are interested in Joeys to meet with him and other College staff of the College to an event at the Charbonnier Hotel at 6.30pm. A presentation will be provided about boarding life, scholarships/bursaries, the extra-curricular program and how a Joeys education will benefit your son. To register for this event or book a meeting with the Headmaster, please go to [www.joey.org/events/](http://www.joey.org/events/)



After the birth of her children, 22-year-old **Ronita** was at risk of having to leave school permanently. But, with the support of Caritas Australia's partners in the Philippines, she resumed her studies and secured a job at a call centre to support her family.

**Please donate to Project Compassion.**

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 and envelopes available from your parish, by visiting [caritas.org.au/project-compassion](http://caritas.org.au/project-compassion) or by calling 1800 024 413.



I love cheese. Cheese in my egg toast, cheese in my wrap, cheese on my pancakes, cheese in my burger, cheese with my crackers - I add cheese to almost everything! Almost every meal, every day. I basically couldn't be "happy" without cheese, it's a delicious flavourful paradise in my mouth, which is exactly why I want to give it up for Lent. If you feel this way about something, then you should give it up for Lent too.

Why should you give up the thing that you like so much? Because it's blocking the way of the relationship between you and God. Maybe there is something that you can't say no to; that steals your time with God. I might have been tempted to sneak in a couple slices of cheese in my egg toast a few times over the first days of Lent, but as the days go on, it's not as tempting anymore.

Lent is a time of prayer, fasting and almsgiving, a time of preparation. Fasting helps us spend more time in adoration and reflect on what's stopping us from doing that. By giving up the things that you think makes you feel happy, you can focus on what gives you eternal happiness.

Cheese, or whatever it is, can only make us feel good for a limited amount of time. I encourage people of all ages to spend more time in prayer and give up something that can get in the way of their relationship with God, whether it's giving up sugary food or limiting the amount of screen time with video games, it can help a lot just by giving up that thing. Just because you are giving something up doesn't mean it's a big loss, you actually gain something even more than that.