



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

The Ascension of the Lord, Year B

World Communications Day

12 May 2024

First Reading

Acts 1:1-11

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

In my earlier work, Theophilus, I dealt with everything Jesus had done and taught from the beginning until the day he gave his instructions to the apostles he had chosen through the Holy Spirit, and was taken up to heaven. He had shown himself alive to them after his Passion by many demonstrations: for forty days he had continued to appear to them and tell them about the kingdom of God. When he had been at table with them, he had told them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for what the Father had promised. 'It is,' he had said, 'what you have heard me speak about: John baptised with water but you, not many days from now, will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.'

Now having met together, they asked him, 'Lord, has the time come? Are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know times or dates that the Father has decided by his own authority, but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and then you will be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem but throughout Judaea and Samaria, and indeed to the ends of the earth.'

As he said this he was lifted up while they looked on, and a cloud took him from their sight. They were still staring into the sky when suddenly two men in white were standing near them and they said, 'Why are you men from Galilee standing here looking into the sky? Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven, this same Jesus will come back in the same way as you have seen him go there.'

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 46:2-3. 6-9. R. v.6

(R.) God mounts his throne to shouts of joy: a blare of trumpets for the Lord.

All peoples, clap your hands,
cry to God with shouts of joy!
For the Lord, the Most High, we must fear,
great king over all the earth. **(R.)**

God goes up with shouts of joy;
the Lord goes up with trumpet blast.
Sing praise for God, sing praise,
sing praise to our king, sing praise. **(R.)**

God is king of all the earth.
Sing praise with all your skill.
God is king over the nations;
God reigns on his holy throne. **(R.)**

Second Reading

Ephesians 1:17-23

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you a spirit of wisdom and perception of what is revealed, to bring you to full knowledge of him. May he enlighten the eyes of your mind so that you can see what hope his call holds for you, what rich glories he has promised the saints will inherit and how infinitely great is the power that he has exercised for us believers. This you can tell from the strength of his power at work in Christ, when he used it to raise him from the dead and to make him sit at his right hand, in heaven, far above every Sovereignty, Authority, Power, or Domination, or any other name that can be named, not only in this age, but also in the age to come. He has put all things under his feet, and made him, as the ruler of everything, the head of the Church; which is his body, the fullness of him who fills the whole creation.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Mt 28:19. 20

Alleluia, alleluia!

Go and teach all people my gospel.

I am with you always, until the end of the world.

Alleluia!

Gospel

Mark 16:15-20

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark.

Jesus showed himself to the Eleven and said to them, 'Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News to all creation. He who believes and is baptised is saved; he who does not believe will be condemned. These are the signs that will be associated with believers: in my name they will cast out devils; they will have the gift of tongues; they will pick up snakes in their hands, and be unharmed should they drink deadly poison; they will lay their hands on the sick, who will recover.'

And so the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven: there at the right hand of God he took his place, while they, going out, preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word by the signs that accompanied it.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.



**REFLECTION
BY NICK BRODIE**

Francis' Focus

Pope Francis encourages us to contemplate two aspects of the Ascension. 'On the one hand it directs our gaze towards heaven,' he says. 'On the other, it reminds us of the mission of the Church.'

The Pope points out that these two aspects are interconnected. In this feast we do not remember Jesus' bodily departure so much as celebrate his continuing presence in the world through the Christian community.

The Pope suggests that 'the Ascension exhorts us to lift our gaze toward heaven, in order to return it immediately to the earth, to implement the tasks that the Risen Lord entrusts to us.' As today's Gospel declares, Jesus is in heaven. Yet, by 'working with' his disciples, he is also still present in the world.

In a particular way in his encyclical *Laudato Si'* Pope Francis draws out the importance for Christians of proclaiming 'the Good News to all creation'. Picking up scriptural teaching, he highlights how 'all creation is bound up with the mystery of Christ' and reminds us that the Eucharist should motivate us 'to be stewards of all creation.'

People of the Ascension, therefore, do not just tell other people about Jesus. Rather, People of the Ascension, as the Pope puts it, 'seek Christ along the paths of our time'. We are called to serve the poor and the needy and the world in which they live. We are called to become 'visible signs of hope' for the whole of creation

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| ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: Men of Galilee, why gaze in wonder at the heavens? This Jesus whom you saw ascending into heaven will return as you saw him go, alleluia. |
| COMMUNION ANTIPHON: Behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age, alleluia. |
| NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURES Pentecost, Year B 1st Reading: Acts 2:1-11 2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:3-7, 12-13 Gospel: John 20:19-23 |
| 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: Mary Bailey, Eunice Benn, Lorraine Cooper, Phuong Ho, Ron Hebbe, Austin Hoffman, Noel House, Taylor Lojszczyk, Warren Markham, Bob MacDonnell, Indira Nanda, Jen Phillips, Olga Roberts, Selene Maree Stanholm-Atkins and Sharon Wood. **Bring healing, comfort, and peace to their bodies. Send strength to their carers.**

Anniversaries: Ian Tope, Ivan Meyn and Jeremiah Lynch. **Having returned to the Father, may they rest in peace.**

Recently Deceased: Donnie Lynch (formerly of Singleton) **May they rest in peace and light perpetual shine upon them.**

*The prayers for the sick list will be cleared at the end of May.
If you wish for a name to remain on the list, please contact the Parish Office.*

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 | St Patrick's Church | Queen Street Singleton 2330 | |
| Broke | Immaculate Conception Catholic Church | Wollombi Street, Broke | |
| Glendon Brook | St. Paul's Catholic Church | 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 | Acting Principal: Ms Lauren Carlson | 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 Alex Stafford | Office: 02 4015 2860 | Email: singleton@stnicholasmn.org.au |
| St Nicholas Early Education Branxton | Director: Ms Stella Danks | Office: 02 4931 1220 | Email: branxton@stnicholasmn.org.au |

MASS ROSTER – SUNDAY 19 MAY 2024

| | 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 | VOLUNTEER NEEDED | J Dries | J Dries | J Brackenrig (office closed Mon and Tues) |
| Commentator | | K Ingold | | | SCAE LEADER REQD | |
| Readers | C Zaragoza M Thomas | L Harrison | C Spiteri D Thompson | T Cochrane VOLUNTEER NEEDED | St Catherine's Staff | |
| Prayers | | K Ingold | P Boyd | VOLUNTEER NEEDED | St Catherine's Staff | |
| Offertory | K Jones K Jones | D Clarke J Clarke | VOLUNTEER NEEDED | 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 |
|--|--|--|--|--|---|---|
| 13 May | 14 May | 15 May | 16 May | 17 May | 18 May | 19 May |
| <i>Our Lady of Fatima</i> | ST MATTHIAS, APOSTLE | | | | <i>St John I, Pope</i> | PENTECOST, YEAR B |
| OFFICE CLOSED | OFFICE CLOSED | OFFICE OPEN | OFFICE OPEN | OFFICE OPEN | | |
| <u>8.00am</u> LOTW St Patrick's Singleton | <u>5.00pm</u> LOTW St Patrick's Singleton | <u>9.20am</u> LOTW St Patrick's Singleton | <u>5.00pm</u> LOTW St Patrick's Singleton | <u>9.20am</u> LOTW St Patrick's Singleton | <u>9.00am</u> Novena <u>9.20am</u> LOTW St Patrick's Singleton | <u>7.00am</u> Mass <u>10.00m</u> Mass <u>5.00pm</u> SCAE St Patrick's Singleton |
| <u>6.00pm</u> Sacramental Program Meeting | NO MASS | | NO MASS | | <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.

Mass Changes During May

Fr Thomas will be taking leave during May to return home to India. During this time we will have Fr Peter Street and Fr Greg Arnold celebrating the weekend masses. There will be no weekday Mass said in Greta or Branxton for the month. Please check the **Weekly Mass Diary** for any changes. Next week the Parish Office will be closed Monday and Tuesday.

Mass Count During May

The Council of Priests recently reviewed the results of the most recent Mass count which was undertaken in 2021. It was determined that these figures were significantly affected by COVID and do not accurately reflect our current reality. A review of Pastoral Ministries in the Diocese has resulted in a renewed focus on mission and evangelization so Bishop Michael and the Council are of the view that a Mass count reflecting our current reality would be beneficial at this time. The count will take place of the four Sundays of May. This notice is to make you aware that the count will be taking place and that you will be asked which age group you fit into when attending Mass on those Sundays. Thank you for your cooperation.

Happy Birthday Bishop Michael!

Bishop Michael will celebrate his birthday on Monday 13 May! Please keep him in your thoughts and prayers on his special day!

Let's Celebrate!

On Monday 13 May 2024, Erica will have been working as our Parish Secretary for 10 years! To celebrate this milestone, you are invited to dinner in her honour at Club Singleton Restaurant on Monday 13 May from 6pm.

Singleton Parish Sacramental Program Meeting

All families involved in the 2024 Sacramental Program in the Singleton parish are asked to attend an information meeting for the upcoming Sacrament of Confirmation on Monday 13 May from 6pm in St Patrick's Church Singleton.

Singleton Senior Singles Monthly Lunch

The Senior Singles Group will meet for their monthly lunch on Tuesday 14 May 2024 at 12pm in the Albion Hotel Restaurant. Any seniors who are single are invited along for a bit of camaraderie and chat over a meal.

St Brigid's Caritas Monthly Luncheon

Everyone is invited to join the St Brigid's Caritas group for their monthly luncheon at Miller Park Hotel on Friday 17 May. Lunch will be from 12pm and if you would like to attend, please confirm with Mercia.

Annual Pilgrimage to MacKillop Place

This year's pilgrimage to MacKillop Place will be on Friday 23 August 2024. Cost is \$80.00 per person. Bus will leave Branxton at 6.15am and picking up at Greta, Lochinvar, Rutherford and East Maitland at 7am. Cost includes morning tea, museum entry, Mass in the chapel at 12pm with Fr Thomas. You will need to buy your own lunch at North Ryde RSL. Bus will leave Sydney at 3pm. Numbers must be finalised by 12 July. Names to Mercia via the Parish Office or see Mercia at Mass. We would encourage everyone to join us for the trip as it is a spiritually rewarding day.

Diocesan Cursillo - Save the Date

Come journey with us! A beautiful weekend of renewal prepared by the Diocesan Cursillo team, laypersons, religious and priests. The weekend is held at The Catalina Conference Centre, 171 Dorrington Rd, Rathmines from 7.30pm Thursday June 13 and concludes with Mass on Sunday afternoon June 16. The cost is \$360 which includes 3 night's accommodation, all meals/morning and afternoon teas, lovingly prepared by our catering team and all resources you'll need on the weekend. Please contact the following for a registration form: **Mike and Linda Norris** - mikelinda4@hotmail.com or **Gerard McMillan** - gimcmillan51@gmail.com

Laudato Si' Week 19-26 May 2024

Laudato Si' is an encyclical written by Pope Francis in May 2015. Translated as 'praise be to you', the letter addresses the Catholic Social Teaching, Care for Our Common Home. Pope Francis focuses on the social and ecological crisis that exists in our world today and what we can do to ensure we preserve our planet for future generations. In the encyclical, Pope Francis emphasises our responsibility to respond to both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. Through Integral Ecology, Pope Francis teaches that 'everything is connected'. By taking action caring for creation, we are also caring for the poorest and most vulnerable in our world.

Keep an eye on the Catholic Parishes of Singleton and Branxton Facebook Page and the News section of our website from next Sunday to find ways you can help care for our common home.

A Mother's Day Blessing

Blessed is the Mother
who lets the Lord
be her guiding hand,
whose faith brings
her family courage,
whose wisdom comes
from God,
and whose children
still stand and honour her.

Happy Mother's Day



**LETTER OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS
TO MSGR. RINO FISICHELLA, PRESIDENT OF THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL
FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE NEW EVANGELIZATION,
FOR THE JUBILEE 2025**



Part 2 of 2

The spiritual dimension of the Jubilee, which calls for conversion, should also embrace these fundamental aspects of our life in society as part of a coherent whole. In the realization that all of us are pilgrims on this earth, which the Lord has charged us to till and keep (cf. Gen 2:15), may we never fail, in the course of our sojourn, to contemplate the beauty of creation and care for our common home. It is my hope that the coming Jubilee Year will be celebrated and experienced with this intention too. Growing numbers of men and women, including many young people and children, have come to realize that care for creation is an essential expression of our faith in God and our obedience to his will.

To you, dear Brother, I entrust responsibility for finding suitable ways for the Holy Year to be planned and celebrated with deep faith, lively hope and active charity. The Dicastery charged with promoting the new evangelization can help make this season of grace a significant stimulus to the pastoral outreach of the particular Churches, both Latin and Eastern, which are called in these years to intensify their commitment to synodality. In this regard, our pilgrimage towards the Jubilee will express and confirm the shared journey that the Church is called to make, in order to be ever more fully a sign and instrument of unity in harmonious diversity. It will be important to foster a renewed awareness of the demands of the universal call to responsible participation by enhancing the charisms and ministries that the Holy Spirit never ceases to bestow for the building up of the one Church. The four Constitutions of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, together with the Magisterium of these recent decades, will continue to provide direction and guidance to God's holy people, so that it can press forward in its mission of bringing the joyful proclamation of the Gospel to everyone.

As is customary, the Bull of Indiction, to be issued in due course, will contain the necessary guidelines for celebrating the Jubilee of 2025. In this time of preparation, I would greatly desire that we devote 2024, the year preceding the Jubilee event, to a great "symphony" of prayer. Prayer, above all else, to renew our desire to be in the presence of the Lord, to listen to him and to adore him. Prayer, moreover, to thank God for the many gifts of his love for us and to praise his work in creation, which summons everyone to respect it and to take concrete and responsible steps to protect it. Prayer as the expression of a single "heart and soul" (cf. Acts 4:32), which then translates into solidarity and the sharing of our daily bread. Prayer that makes it possible for every man and woman in this world to turn to the one God and to reveal to him what lies hidden in the depths of their heart. Prayer as the royal road to holiness, which enables us to be contemplative even in the midst of activity. In a word, may it be an intense year of prayer in which hearts are opened to receive the outpouring of God's grace and to make the "Our Father," the prayer Jesus taught us, the life programme of each of his disciples.

I ask the Blessed Virgin Mary to accompany the Church on the journey of preparation for the grace-filled event of the Jubilee, and to you and your co-workers, with gratitude, I cordially send my Blessing.

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 11 February 2022, Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Lourdes.

FRANCIS