



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

21st Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

Social Justice Sunday

25 August 2024

First Reading Joshua 24:1-2, 15-18

A reading from the book of Joshua

Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel together at Shechem; then he called the elders, leaders, judges and scribes of Israel, and they presented themselves before God. Then Joshua said to all the people: 'If you will not serve the Lord, choose today whom you wish to serve, whether the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are now living. As for me and my House, we will serve the Lord.'

The people answered, 'We have no intention of deserting the Lord and serving other gods! Was it not the Lord our God who brought us and our ancestors out of the land of Egypt, the house of slavery, who worked those great wonders before our eyes and preserved us all along the way we travelled and among all the peoples through whom we journeyed. We too will serve the Lord, for he is our God.'

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 33:2-16-23. R. v.9

(R.) Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

I will bless the Lord at all times,
his praise always on my lips;
in the Lord my soul shall make its boast.
The humble shall hear and be glad. **(R.)**

The Lord turns his face against the wicked
to destroy their remembrance from the earth.
The Lord turns his eyes to the just
and his ears to their appeal. **(R.)**

They call and the Lord hears
and rescues them in all their distress.
The Lord is close to the broken-hearted;
those whose spirit is crushed he will save. **(R.)**

Many are the trials of the just man
but from them all the Lord will rescue him.
He will keep guard over all his bones,
not one of his bones shall be broken. **(R.)**

Evil brings death to the wicked;
those who hate the good are doomed.
The Lord ransoms the souls of his servants.
Those who hide in him shall not be condemned. **(R.)**

Second Reading Ephesians 5:21-32

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians.

Give way to one another in obedience to Christ. Wives should regard their husbands as they regard the Lord, since as Christ is

head of the Church and saves the whole body, so is a husband the head of his wife; and as the Church submits to Christ, so should wives to their husbands, in everything. Husbands should love their wives just as Christ loved the Church and sacrificed himself for her to make her holy. He made her clean by washing her in water with a form of words, so that when he took her to himself she would be glorious, with no speck or wrinkle or anything like that, but holy and faultless. In the same way, husbands must love their wives as they love their own bodies; for a man to love his wife is for him to love himself. A man never hates his own body, but he feeds it and looks after it; and that is the way Christ treats the Church, because it is his body – and we are its living parts. For this reason, a man must leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one body. This mystery has many implications; but I am saying it applies to Christ and the Church.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation See John 6:63. 68

Alleluia, alleluia!

**Your words, Lord, are spirit and life:
you have the words of everlasting life.**

Alleluia!

Gospel

John 6:60-69

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

After hearing his doctrine many of the followers of Jesus said, 'This is intolerable language. How could anyone accept it?' Jesus was aware that his followers were complaining about it and said, 'Does this upset you? What if you should see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before?'

'It is the spirit that gives life,
the flesh has nothing to offer.

The words I have spoken to you are spirit
and they are life.

'But there are some of you who do not believe.' For Jesus knew from the outset those who did not believe, and who it was that would betray him. He went on, 'This is why I told you that no one could come to me unless the Father allows him.' After this, many of his disciples left him and stopped going with him.

Then Jesus said to the Twelve, 'What about you, do you want to go away too?' Simon Peter answered, 'Lord, who shall we go to? You have the message of eternal life, and we believe; we know that you are the Holy One of God.'

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.



**REFLECTION
BY NICK BRODIE**

Francis' Focus

Why did the crowd reject Jesus? They followed him! He fed them! And then they complain and leave. What was that about?

In short, people were scandalised by what Jesus said. They thought differently than Jesus about his mission. They sought earthly triumph over spiritual truth.

An important lesson for us, Pope Francis says, is that 'we must not pursue God in dreams and in images of grandeur and power.' Rather, as the Pope explains, God 'must be recognised in the humanity of Jesus and, as a consequence, in that of the brothers and sisters we meet on the path of life.'

This is a hard teaching for many to accept, even among those within the Church.

God, the Pope reiterates, 'asks us to seek him not outside of life and history, but in relationship with Christ and with our brothers and sisters. 'Seeking him in life,' the Pope adds, 'in history, in our daily life ... is the road to encounter with God: the relationship with Christ and our brothers and sisters.'

Therefore, with Peter, and his successor Pope Francis, 'we ask for the grace to let ourselves be provoked and converted.' To whom shall we turn? To our brothers and sisters in need. We need to be open to being Christ to them, for they may well be Christ for us.

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ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:
Turn your ear, O Lord, and answer me; save the servant who trusts in you, my God. Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I cry to you all the day long.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON:
The earth is replete with the fruits of your work, O Lord; you bring forth bread from the earth and wine to cheer the heart.

NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURES
22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B
1st Reading: Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-8
2nd Reading: James 1:17-18, 21-22, 27
Gospel: Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

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

We remember in our prayers:

Sick: Cecily Agnew, Mary Bailey, Basil Bendeich, Lorraine Cooper, Tony Ernst, Ron Hebbe, Austin Hoffman, Indira Nanda, Ian Paget, Jen Phillips, Selene Stanholm-Atkins, Colleen Torrington, Sharon Wood. **Bring healing, comfort, and peace to their bodies. Send strength to their carers.**

Anniversaries: Pearl Banister, Ron Cox, Margaret Brooker, Ellen Garner, Kate Roberts, Agnes Thomas.

Recently Deceased: Noeleen Lanesbury (Weds 28/8 1pm St Patrick's).

Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord, and may light perpetual shine upon them. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen.

Mass intentions for publication may be written on an envelope on the collection plate, or to the Parish Office by email or phone by 12pm Wednesday. Mass offering envelopes are available in each church entrance. Please write details clearly to avoid errors. A reminder that you need the permission of the person or their family to enable names to be published.

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	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 1 SEPTEMBER 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 Woolley
Commentator		L Gorczyca	G Cattermole	VOLUNTEER NEEDED		
Readers	P Conroy S Trunk	M Ingold	SCAE LEADER REQD J Tindale E Thomas	T Cochrane	P Goodwin A Borg	
Prayers		L Gorczyca	C Langford	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	M Cunningham	
Offertory	C & A Trunk	C Anderson L Harrison		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
26 August	27 August <i>St Monica</i>	28 August <i>St Augustine</i>	29 August <i>The Passion of St John the Baptist</i>	30 August	31 August	1 September TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR B
OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE OPEN		
<u>8.00am</u> Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	<u>5.00pm</u> Mas <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	<u>9.20am</u> LOTW <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	<u>5.00pm</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> SCAE <u>10.00m</u> Mass <u>5.00pm</u> Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>
	<u>8.55am</u> Rosary <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> 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, 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.

Changes this Week

The Parish Office will be open Monday to Friday this week and closed Tuesday 3 September.

Welcome to Fr John Tobin who will be celebrating Mass at Greta this Sunday morning. Congratulations on the 25th Anniversary of your Ordination.

National Child Protection Week

Child abuse and neglect is preventable. If we all work together as a community, we can create an Australia where all children can grow up safe and well. What role can you play in supporting children and their families? Richard Cooke, CEO, NAPCAN



National Child Protection Week invites all Australians to play their part to promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. National Child Protection Week (NCPW) will take place from 1-7 September in 2024. This year, the theme is:

'EVERY CONVERSATION MATTERS'

We can all play a part by creating stronger, safer neighbourhoods. This can be achieved by talking to your neighbours, checking in with friends, being a good role model, supporting and being kind to parents rather than judging or being competitive, offering to assist where possible, and speaking up if you see something that is unsafe.

It is important that we listen to, and value, what children have to say. Where possible, include their voices in decision-making and be advocates for their best interest.

By speaking regularly with children about their personal safety and how they can protect themselves, as well as "tuning in" to their worries, children are more likely to trust us and feel comfortable to talk with us when something big is going on.

Make your influence positive; start a conversation today with your colleagues and families about listening to and valuing the voice of children and young people.

For more information and resources go to <https://officeofsafeguarding.org.au>

Perpetual Day of Remembrance

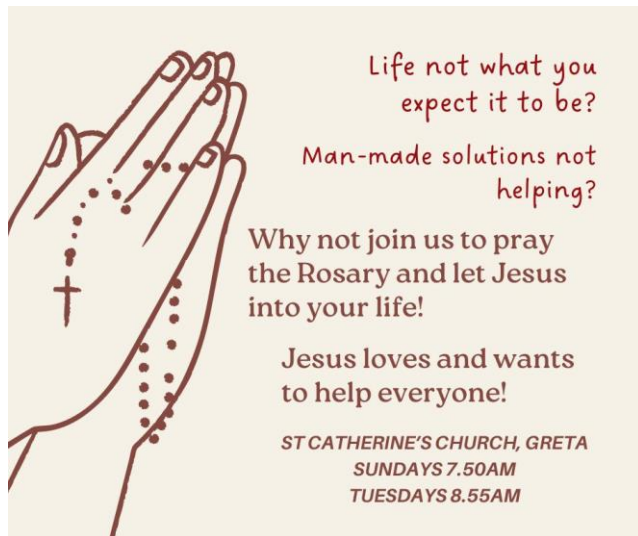
September 15, promulgated as a 'Perpetual Day of Remembrance' in our diocese, marks a day of solemn remembrance of the harm caused by a history of child sexual abuse and failure to protect children. It has two aspects: one focused on supporting survivors and the other on the prayer of the whole church. This year Perpetual Day of Remembrance Sunday falls on September 15. As a people of faith, we can pray for a change of heart as the ground of hope for a safer future for all. Special prayer resources are available online at www.mn.catholic.org.au/church-mission/perpetual-day-of-remembrance Every person is invited to use and help disseminate the resource for Individuals and households as widely as possible. May Christ be our Light.

Hunter Men's Rosary Crusade

The pilgrimage travels to four Churches over 6.5kms. The starting point is at Sacred Heart Cathedral, 841 Hunter St Newcastle West at 11.00am on 14 September. Pilgrims will walk to the Immaculate Heart of Mary (Islington), St Mary's Star of the Sea (Newcastle) St Joseph's (Merewether) returning to the Sacred Heart Cathedral at approximately 1.00pm. Register before 7 September at: <https://forms.office.com/r/q5fKj1HdgW>

Season of Creation: Sings

All in the Newcastle, Hunter and Manning community are invited to gather to sing in praise and wonder of creation as a celebration of the Season of Creation on Saturday 21 September 2024, 2-4pm in Sacred Heart Cathedral. In the spirit of community choirs, we will learn a song, pray, and enjoy afternoon tea. Register at <https://forms.office.com/r/xKCr907ew6> Please bring a cutting of a favourite plant to exchange your cuttings during prayer. Those who love taking photos of nature can join the **Season of Creation Photography** initiative and send your image/s to rose.mcallister@mn.catholic.org.au by 16/09/24. The images will be displayed at Creation Sings.



2024-2025 Social Justice Statement – Zoom Discussion

In the 2024-2025 Social Justice Statement – *Truth and Peace: A Gospel Word in a Violent World*, Australia's Bishops scrutinise the signs of our own troubled times, observe the violence around us, and ask why it is so. They also ask what is needed if there is to be peace. Join us for an online Zoom discussion on Wednesday 4 September at 7pm, as we break open the document, hear responses from across our Diocese, and participate in small group discussions on how we can be peacemakers in our communities. Register Here: www.eventbrite.com.au/e/truth-and-peace-exploring-the-social-justice-statement-tickets-991438247487

aMeN caMiNo Seasons of Creation Weekend Retreat

Join us for an aMeN caMiNo weekend experience during this year's Season of Creation at the beautiful Myall Coast. This caMiNo is suitable for both beginners and experienced walkers. It offers a one or two-day experience on 7 and 8 September. For more information visit our website: mn.catholic.org.au/church-mission/catholic-life/faith-formation/amen-camino.



The Australian Bishops Conference's social justice statement for 2024-2025, "Truth and Peace: A Gospel Word in a Violent World," addresses the urgent need for peace from a Gospel perspective. This document highlights the alarming levels of global and local violence, noting that the 20th century was the most violent in history, and the early 21st century continues to see numerous conflicts. In 2022, there were 55 state-based conflicts and 82 non-state conflicts affecting two billion people worldwide. Specific conflicts in the Asia-Pacific region, such as Myanmar's military coup, the persecution of Rohingya people, the crackdown on pro-democracy movements in Hong Kong, and ongoing violence in West Papua and Papua New Guinea, underscore the pervasive nature of violence and its devastating impacts.

The document discusses the erosion of truth in public life, emphasizing the rise of a post-truth culture where facts are frequently contested and falsified. This phenomenon has been exacerbated by new technologies and social media platforms that rapidly disseminate fake news and conspiracy theories, leading to widespread misinformation.

In a post-truth world, the distinction between truth and lies blurs, leading to a crisis of truth and trust. Without a shared understanding of basic facts, civil society and the rule of law are undermined, making informed democratic debate and accountability difficult. This environment allows for the rise of populism and extremism, where grievances are inflamed and followers are mobilized through disinformation. Authoritarian regimes exploit democratic processes to subvert democracy, further destabilizing societies.

Catholics are called to be active peacemakers by embracing a culture of encounter and dialogue, inspired by Jesus Christ, who is presented as the ultimate source of peace and truth. The document underscores the responsibility of Catholics to collaborate with all people of goodwill to build genuine peace based on truth and trust. Practical suggestions for promoting peace include building relationships with those affected by violence, supporting local peace initiatives, and engaging in interfaith and ecumenical dialogue. Community involvement and collective action are stressed as crucial in the pursuit of peace.

Theologically, the document positions Jesus as the embodiment of God's truth and peace, emphasizing that the fullness of peace is a divine gift requiring human cooperation. Believers are encouraged to trust in the power of the crucified and risen Christ, viewing peace as both a divine gift and a human task. It suggests that peace can be achieved through the proactive efforts of individuals and communities, guided by the principles of the Gospel.

"Truth and Peace: A Gospel Word in a Violent World" is a comprehensive call to action for Catholics and all people of goodwill to engage in peacebuilding through truth-telling, dialogue, and practical initiatives. It frames peace as a realistic and attainable goal, grounded in the teachings of the Gospel and the example of Jesus Christ. By addressing both global and local conflicts, the statement encourages a collective effort towards a peaceful world, rooted in the values espoused by the Catholic faith.



PROJECT 19 – WATER TANKS BURUNDI

Sr Cecile from the congregation of Immaculate Heart of Mary (Bene Maria) in Burundi has contacted the Hope Tree Group to assist with installing new water tanks at the hostel where students stay to attend school.

At the moment, they are collecting water from the river and transporting back to the hostel to use.

You may remember that we assisted the children by supplying new mattresses in the hostel.

The Hope Tree Group is hoping to donate \$1800 for two new tanks to be installed. Cash donations can be left in the donation box at each church or donate online by clicking the **DONATE** button on our website www.singletoncatholicparish.org.au and scrolling to the details for Hope Tree Group.



Congratulations on Your First Holy Communion

This weekend we welcome family and friends joining their children as they receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion for the very first time.

Coming to the altar to receive the eucharist completes their process of Christian Initiation.

God Bless all of you as you now continue to be disciples by returning each Sunday to be nourished by the Word of God and the Body of Christ.