



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

Third Sunday of Advent, Year C

15 December 2024

First Reading **Zephaniah 3:14-18**
A reading from the prophet Zephaniah.

Shout for joy, daughter of Zion,
Israel, shout aloud!
Rejoice, exult with all your heart,
daughter of Jerusalem!
The Lord has repealed your sentence;
he has driven your enemies away.
The Lord, the king of Israel, is in your midst;
you have no more evil to fear.
When that day comes, word will come to
Jerusalem:
Zion, have no fear,
do not let your hands fall limp.
The Lord your God is in your midst,
a victorious warrior.
He will exult with joy over you,
he will renew you by his love;
he will dance with shouts of joy for you
as on a day of festival.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm **Is 12:2-6 R. v.6**

**(R.) Cry out with joy and gladness: for
among you is the great and Holy One
of Israel.**

Truly, God is my salvation,
I trust, I shall not fear.
For the Lord is my strength, my song,
he became my saviour.
With joy you will draw water
from the wells of salvation. **(R.)**

Give thanks to the Lord, give praise to his
name!
Make his mighty deeds known to the
peoples!
Declare the greatness of his name. **(R.)**

Sing a psalm to the Lord
for he has done glorious deeds,
make them known to all the earth!
People of Zion, sing and shout for joy
for great in your midst is the Holy One of
Israel. **(R.)**

Second Reading **Philippians 4:4-7**
*A reading from the letter of St Paul to the
Philippians.*

I want you to be happy, always happy in the
Lord; I repeat, what I want is your
happiness. Let your tolerance be evident to
everyone: the Lord is very near. There is no
need to worry; but if there is anything you
need, pray for it, asking God for it with
prayer and thanksgiving, and that peace of
God, which is so much greater than we can
understand, will guard your hearts and
your thoughts, in Christ Jesus.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation
Isaiah 61:1 (Lk 4:18)

Alleluia, alleluia!
The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;
**he sent me to bring Good News to the
poor.**
Alleluia!

Gospel **Luke 3:10-18**
*A reading from the holy Gospel according to
Luke.*

When all the people asked John, 'What
must we do?' he answered, 'If anyone has
two tunics he must share with the man who
has none, and the one with something to
eat must do the same.' There were tax
collectors too who came for baptism, and
these said to him, 'Master, what must we
do?' He said to them, 'Exact no more than
your rate.' Some soldiers asked him in
their turn, 'What about us? What must we
do?' He said to them, 'No intimidation! No
extortion! Be content with your pay!'
A feeling of expectancy had grown among
the people, who were beginning to think
that John might be the Christ, so John
declared before them all, 'I baptise you
with water, but someone is coming,
someone who is more powerful than I am,
and I am not fit to undo the strap of his
sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy
Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fan is in his
hand to clear his threshing-floor and to
gather the wheat into his barn; but the
chaff he will burn in a fire that will never go
out.' As well as this, there were many other
things he said to exhort the people and to
announce the Good News to them.

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



REFLECTION
BY FR MICHAEL TATE

Some people have an image of God who
must be obeyed out of fear. Rules of
behaviour are kept as part of a deal to
avoid punishment. But St Paul was
imitating God when he told the Philippians
that all he wanted was their 'happiness'.
God's deepest desire is that we share
divine bliss. St Thomas Aquinas tells us
that the goal of human life is this beatific
happiness.

Of course, there is a way of life which
responds to the Divine Lover. John the
Baptist insists on rules of social justice,
particularly those which forbid taking
advantage of the vulnerable. But these are
the minimum. He envisages a response of
extravagant generosity. It will take Baptism
in the Holy Spirit and Fire to make this
possible.

This was effected by the One foretold by
John. He doesn't name him, but we know
it was Jesus of Nazareth who had the
power to unleash such over-the-top
generosity. Jesus sent his Holy Spirit at
Pentecost as if in wind and fire. This
created a new community which, the Acts
of Apostles tells us, responded with acts of
unrestrained generosity to the vulnerable
and needy.

We might pause for a moment to pray for
a generous spirit responding in gratitude
to the Divine Lover who, as Risen Lord, has
the power and will to enable us to be filled
with Divine Bliss.

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ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near.
COMMUNION ANTIPHON: Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear. Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.
NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURES Fourth Sunday of Advent, Year C 1st Reading: Micah 5:1-4 2nd Reading: Hebrews 10:5-10 Gospel: Luke 1:39-45
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, Lorraine Cooper, Mary Della-ca, Jose De Sousa, Tony Ernst, Ron Hebbe, Austin Hoffman, Liz Matt, Indira Nanda, Jen Phillips, Selene Stanholm-Atkins, Ross Timmins, Colleen Torrington, Sharon Wood, Zoe. **Bring healing, comfort, and peace to their bodies. Send strength to their carers.**

Baptisms: Elijah Norrie (Singleton). **Called by name to be a child of God.**

Recently Deceased: Christine Lewis (20/12 Greta 10.00am)

Anniversaries: Lucien Gorczyca, Dulcie Standing, Marjorie Bendeich.

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 may be written on an envelope and placed on the collection plate, emailed or phoned to the Parish Office by 12pm Wednesday. Mass offering envelopes are available in each church. 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	Principal: Mr Dave Crawford	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 22 DECEMBER 2024

	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	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	J Dries	J Dries	G McMillan
Commentator		K Ingold	G Cattermole	SCAE LEADER REQ		
Readers	H Hartcher C Trunk	L Gorczyca	S Bates	R James D Cantrall	H Rapp C Brackenrig O Brackenrig	
Prayers		K Ingold	E Thomas	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	A Skardon	
Offertory	M Thomas A Thomas	C Anderson L Harrison	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	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
16 December	17 December	18 December	19 December	20 December	21 December <i>St Peter Canisius</i>	22 December <i>FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR C</i>
OFFICE CLOSED	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>5.00pm</u> Reconciliation <u>6.00pm</u> Mass St Patrick's Singleton	<u>9.20am</u> Mass St Patrick's Singleton <u>11.00am</u> Mass Mercy Home	<u>9.00am</u> Novena <u>9.20am</u> Mass St Patrick's Singleton <u>6.00pm</u> Mass Glendonbrook	<u>7.00am</u> Mass <u>10.00m</u> SCAE <u>6.00pm</u> Mass St Patrick's Singleton
	<u>9.20am</u> Mass St Catherine's Greta		<u>9.20am</u> Mass St Brigid's Branxton	<u>10.00am</u> Funeral Mass Greta <u>5.00pm</u> Reconciliation 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.

Changes for December

Thank you to Fr John Tobin who will be saying Mass alternating with Greta and Branxton in December. Please check the Weekly Mass Diary for any changes this week.

Resumption of Communion from the Chalice

As of Sunday 1 December, communion in both species will be offered at all Masses in our Parishes. To facilitate this, Extraordinary Ministers of Communion are required for each Mass. If you wish to volunteer for this ministry, please place your name on the sheets at the back of the church. Formation will then be offered prior to 1 December.

New Rosters are being prepared for St. Brigid's and St Patrick's. Please let us know if you still wish to be included on the roster by indicating on the sheet on the noticeboard if you wish to minister as Proclaiming the Word, Offertory Procession and/or Special Minister.

St Catherine's Greta Morning Tea

Morning Tea will be held after Mass this Sunday 15 December at St Catherine's Church Greta. It will be a great chance to come together to celebrate the Advent and Christmas Season together. Please see Joy for more details.

The 'True Meaning of Christmas' Competition

To celebrate the Advent and Christmas Season, students at St Catherine's Catholic College have been asked to create a visual representation of the 'True Meaning of Christmas'. Each year group at the school, from Kindergarten to Year 12, have been given a theme to base their entry on. The winners will be chosen on their ability to meet the criteria: *Catholic Message, Presentation Quality and Student Effort* and will be announced in week 9. All finalists will be posted on our Parish Facebook page over the coming weeks.

Merry Christmas from St Brigid's Caritas Group

Wishing you peace and joy at Christmas and through the New Year. Thank you for your support during this year! St Brigid's Caritas, Branxton.

Chúc bạn bình an và vui vẻ trong dịp Giáng sinh và năm mới. Cảm ơn sự ủng hộ của bạn trong năm nay! St Brigid's Caritas, Branxton.

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".

Vinnies Giving Tree

The Vinnies Giving Tree is set up in St Patrick's Church with tags labelled with the child you can buy for. Please have all unwrapped presents back to the church with the label attached by Monday 16 December to allow time for them to be packed and delivered in time for Christmas.

URGENT HELP REQUIRED – Vinnies Shop Singleton

Vinnies Hunter Singleton store is in URGENT need of volunteers! You can visit them in store in Macquarie Street Singleton or vinnies.org.au/page/Get_Involved/ to find out more details about getting involved with this vital service in our community.

2025 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.

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 to find Mass times near you, simply searching in the app by your location to find service times in your area. 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

You can make a **big difference** to the lives of people experiencing poverty. When you buy a Global Gift, your loved one gets a special card, and you help raise much-needed funds for vulnerable communities around the world.

Your **gift of water** can help give vulnerable communities improved access to clean water for drinking, hygiene and sanitation. Your **gift of education** can help support adult literacy and numeracy classes to help break the cycle of poverty. Your **gift of food** can help vulnerable families like Maria's to avoid hunger and put food back on their table.

Buy for Christmas at <https://www.globalgifts.org.au/gifts/>

Christmas Gifts from Palms Australia

Are you looking to give something really special this year? Something that makes a tangible difference? Palms has the shop for you! Whether it be a GIFT directly supporting our overseas development program, or some unique Timorese GIFTS for your loved one's home, you'll find that perfect GIFT here! Just go to www.palms.org.au/donate/palms-gift-shop Happy shopping! And yes, your purchase assists the amazing communities overseas. Merry Christmas from Palms Australia!

SPOTLIGHT ON SAFEGUARDING – WATER SAFETY

The Promoters of Safeguarding continue to endorse a culture of safeguarding within the Parish. Students will finish school this coming Wednesday 18 December, marking the start of the festive season which brings joy and relaxation, but it's crucial to stay vigilant about water safety, especially for children. Whether at the beach, pool, or lake, constant supervision is key. Always designate a responsible adult as the 'water watcher' to keep an eye on kids at all times, avoiding distractions like phones. Teach children basic water safety rules, such as never swim alone and swim between the flags on a patrolled beach. Secure home pools with fences and gates and remove toys that may attract children to the water when not in use. Be mindful of inflatable toys or floats; they can give a false sense of security and are not a substitute for supervision. Historically, the time between Christmas and New Year is the most tragic week for drowning deaths in Australia BUT by prioritizing water safety, you can ensure a fun and accident-free Christmas holiday.

Advent Wreath Lighting **THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

The presider lights the third candle, which can be named the Saints' Candle to call to mind all the saints who share the life of Christ by being baptised into his Body the Church.

Presider: Lord Jesus, your coming was proclaimed by the prophet Zephaniah as the who will exult over us and renew us by your love.

All: **Come, Lord Jesus.**

Presider: Lord Jesus, you revealed to Paul that if there is anything we need we just have to ask for it with prayer and thanksgiving.

All: **Come, Lord Jesus.**

Presider: Lord Jesus, as declared by John the Baptist, you will baptise us with the Holy Spirit and fire.

All: **Come, Lord Jesus**



O Come Let Us Adore Him

ADVENT RECONCILIATION

Singleton: 19 Dec, 5.00pm
Branxton: 20 Dec, 5.00pm

CHRISTMAS EVE

St Patrick's Singleton 6.30pm
St Brigid's Branxton 6.30pm

CHRISTMAS DAY

St Patrick's Singleton 12.00am
St Catherine's Greta 8.00am
St Patrick's Singleton 10.00am



Prayer to St Michael Archangel

*Saint Michael the Archangel,
defend us in the day of battle.*

*Be our protection against the wickedness
and snares of the devil.*

*May God rebuke him we humbly pray,
and do thou O Prince of the Heavenly Host,
by the power of God,
cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits,
who wander throughout the world
seeking the ruin of souls.*

Amen.

PARISH OFFICE HOLIDAYS

The Parish Office will close at 3pm Christmas Eve and re-open at 9am on Tuesday 7 January 2025.

Bulletins will be prepared and printed for Masses on 25 December, 29 December and 5 January. If you have any anniversaries or notices for these bulletins, please have them to the Parish Office by **FRIDAY 20 DECEMBER** to ensure they are included.

Thank you for your support of the changes that have occurred with office hours this year. I appreciate it! Erica

PROJECT 20 - A TRIKE FOR REHEMA

The next project requesting assistance from the Hope Tree Group is for 14-year-old Rehema. Rehema lives in Tanzania with her widowed mother, and due to a disability, she needs to use crutches to get around.

To assist her with greater mobility, the Sisters would like to purchase a hand-pedalled trike for her to use. She often helps the Sisters with their Rosary making so this trike would give her some freedom to get to them more often. The cost of the trike is \$450.

The collection boxes will be out at the back of the churches for any assistance you can give towards this project.

