



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

The Epiphany of the Lord, Year C

5 January 2025

First Reading

Isaiah 60:1-6

A reading from the Book of Ecclesiasticus.

Arise, shine out, Jerusalem, for your light has come, the glory of the Lord is rising on you, though night still covers the earth and darkness the peoples.

Above you the Lord now rises and above you his glory appears. The nations come to your light and kings to your dawning brightness.

Lift up your eyes and look round: all are assembling and coming towards you, your sons from far away and your daughters being tenderly carried.

At this sight you will grow radiant, your heart throbbing and full; since the riches of the sea will flow to you; the wealth of the nations come to you; camels in throngs will cover you, and dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; everyone in Sheba will come, bringing gold and incense and singing the praise of the Lord.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 71:1-2. 7-8. 10-13, R. see v.11

(R.) Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.

O God, give your judgement to the king, to a king's son your justice, that he may judge your people in justice and your poor in right judgement. **(R.)**

In his days justice shall flourish and peace till the moon fails. He shall rule from sea to sea, from the Great River to earth's bounds. **(R.)**

The kings of Tarshish and the sea coasts shall pay him tribute. The kings of Sheba and Seba shall bring him gifts. Before him all kings shall fall prostrate, all nations shall serve him. **(R.)**

For he shall save the poor when they cry and the needy who are helpless. He will have pity on the weak and save the lives of the poor. **(R.)**

Second Reading Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6

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

You have probably heard how I have been entrusted by God with the grace he meant for you, and that it was by a revelation that I was given the knowledge of the mystery. This mystery that has now been revealed through the Spirit to his holy apostles and prophets

was unknown to any men in past generations; it means that pagans now share the same inheritance, that they are parts of the same body, and that the same promise has been made to them, in Christ Jesus, through the gospel.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Matthew 2:2

Alleluia, alleluia!

We have seen his star in the East;

and have come to adore the Lord.

Alleluia!

Gospel

Matthew 2:1-12

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

After Jesus had been born at Bethlehem in Judaea during the reign of King Herod, some wise men came to Jerusalem from the east. 'Where is the infant king of the Jews?' they asked. 'We saw his star as it rose and have come to do him homage.' When King Herod heard this he was perturbed, and so was the whole of Jerusalem. He called together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, and enquired of them where the Christ was to be born. 'At Bethlehem in Judaea,' they told him, 'for this is what the prophet wrote:

And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, you are by no means least among the leaders of Judah, for out of you will come a leader

who will shepherd my people Israel.'

Then Herod summoned the wise men to see him privately. He asked them the exact date on which the star had appeared, and sent them on to Bethlehem. 'Go and find out all about the child,' he said 'and when you have found him, let me know, so that I too may go and do him homage.' Having listened to what the king had to say, they set out. And there in front of them was the star they had seen rising; it went forward and halted over the place where the child was. The sight of the star filled them with delight, and going into the house they saw the child with his mother Mary, and falling to their knees they did him homage. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. But they were warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, and returned to their own country by a different way.

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.



REFLECTION

BY LISA-MARIE CALDERONE-STEWART

The astrologers in the Magi story went through quite a journey in search of the baby Jesus. They obviously believed in him and had faith in the star.

Have you ever 'followed a star'? Have you ever gone after a dream or an ideal you believed in? Are you still going after it? What gives you the energy to keep going? How do you know it is worth it?

The gifts brought by the Magi have significance.

Gold is a symbol of wealth and fidelity.

Frankincense is burned to purify the atmosphere by releasing an aromatic and pleasing smell. For centuries, indigenous people in many countries have burned smoke in order to bless and purify themselves, and monks have watched incense rise to the sky as a symbol of their prayers ascending to God.

Myrrh is a kind of resin or oil used for anointing and embalming. It is a symbol of comfort and soothing (who doesn't enjoy a rubdown?) but it is also a foreshadowing of death.

How were these gifts symbolic for Jesus?

What three gifts would be symbolic of you and your life so far? Explain the symbolism.

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ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: Behold, the Lord, the Mighty One, has come; and kingship is in his grasp, and power and dominion.
COMMUNION ANTIPHON: We have seen his star in the East, and have come with gifts to adore the Lord.
NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURES The Baptism of the Lord, C 1st Reading: Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7 2nd Reading: Acts of the Apostles 10:34-38 Gospel: Luke 3:15-16, 21-22
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: Halia Lunney and Magnolia Shields (Singleton). **Called by name to be a child of God.**

Anniversaries: Rev Patrick McCormack, Rev James Fletcher, Brian Tierney, Pam Davy.

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	<i>St Brigid's Catholic Church</i>	Station St, Branxton 2335	
Greta	<i>St Catherine's Catholic Church</i>	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 12 JANUARY 2025						
	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	J Brackenrig G McMillan
Commentator		L Gorczyca	G Cattermole		E Janssen	
Readers	P Conroy M Thomas	K Ingold	J Duldulao H Duldulao	SCAE LEADER REQ M Stowe	T Janssen H Janssen N Janssen	
Prayers		L Gorczyca	P Boyd	F King	E Janssen	
Offertory	S McAlister S Purdon	C Anderson L Harrison	J Dunn M Jones		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
6 January	7 January <i>St Raymond of Penyafort</i>	8 January	9 January	10 January	11 January	12 January <i>THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD, YEAR C</i>
OFFICE CLOSED	OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE OPEN		
<u>8.00am</u> Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	<u>6.00pm</u> Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	<u>9.20am</u> LOTW <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	<u>6.00pm</u> LOTW <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	<u>9.20am</u> LOTW <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> Mass <u>10.00am</u> SCAE <u>6.00pm</u> Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>
	<u>9.20am</u> Mass <i>St Catherine's Greta</i>		NO 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 for January

Thank you to Fr John Tobin who will be saying Mass alternating with Greta and Branxton in January.

Please check the Weekly Mass Diary for changes this week.

Parish Office Holidays: The parish office will re-open at 9am on Tuesday 7 January 2025.

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.

New Rosters are being prepared for 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 we especially need Extraordinary Ministers of Communion.

God's Word Daily Reflections 2025

The ideal companion for the 2025 Holy Year. This edition contains the Bible readings set down for each day of the liturgical year with reflections by eminent spiritual writers. Designed to help you keep the word of God close to your heart in daily life. Make God's Word the foundation of your life, and empower you to pray, to live and to share your faith with others. **To order, complete one of the marked envelopes available at the church with your name, include your \$15 and place on the collection plate. Your copy will be sent to the church for you to collect. Copies can also be purchase from Parish Office.**

Caritas - Vanuatu Earthquake Appeal



Vanuatu has experienced two earthquakes within 24 hours impacting over 116,000 people and causing significant damage to buildings and infrastructure. The main hospital in Port Vila has sustained extensive damage and is overwhelmed by the mass casualties. There are hundreds of people injured or trapped under rubble and at least 14 people have died with the death toll expected to continue to rise. People remain fearful of further disaster, as Vanuatu is one of the most susceptible countries to natural disasters such as earthquakes, storm damage, flooding, and tsunamis. This appeal will provide support to our on the ground partners who are ready to respond to the humanitarian requirements by providing emergency shelter, food and other essentials, psychosocial support, and recovery efforts.

Please Donate today: <http://www.caritas.org.au/vanuatu>

Congratulations

Happy Anniversary to Fr Thomas who on the 2nd of January celebrated 44 years since his priestly ordination. Thank you for your service to our parishes. We honour your prayers, diligence and commitment to our church and attribute much of our parish growth to you. We celebrate you and pray for your continued grace. May God continue to lead and sustain you in your ministry.

2025 Parish Santo Niño Fiesta



Mark your calendars for the 2025 Parish Fiesta to celebrate Santo Niño or the child Jesus. The Fiesta will be held on Sunday 2 February commencing with Mass at 10am in St Patrick's Church and then to the Civic Centre for celebrations. All are welcome to attend! Keep an eye out for when to RSVP. For more information speak with Frieda King.



HAVE YOU THOUGHT? Epiphany

The feast of the Epiphany celebrates the revelation of Jesus to humankind. The wise men are the representatives of humanity bearing witness to this revelation. However, the Epiphany celebrates the revelation of Jesus as not only the Messiah of Israel but the Saviour of the whole world. Interestingly, in this gospel that emphasises the 'Jewishness' of Jesus, the witnesses to the birth are gentiles from a foreign land. Their inclusion is a powerful declaration that the revelation of Jesus is for all people. Regardless of the liturgical year, this reading is always used on the feast of the Epiphany to celebrate this pivotal moment.

GOSPEL FOCUS

Going home

The wise men, or Magi, are warned in a dream not to go back to Herod and they go home by a different way. How could they do anything but go home another way - indeed, go home as different people? They are changed by their encounter with the child Jesus and they go home a different way; in a different state; in a whole different frame of mind. When we genuinely encounter Jesus - in scripture, in life, in prayer, in ourselves - then we cannot go home the same way; we must go home by a different way as the Magi did.

2025 Jubilee Year Pilgrims of Hope



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we stand at the threshold of a new year, let us pause to give thanks to God for the gift of life, faith, and the countless blessings He has poured into our lives and in our parish community. I wish to thank all who volunteer in various ministries in the church. I hope to see more people come forward to take up some of the ministries.

This year is particularly special as we embrace the call to be “**Pilgrims of Hope**” during this **Jubilee Year**. The Jubilee invites us to journey together as a community of faith, celebrating God's merciful love and renewing our commitment to His mission. As pilgrims, we are reminded that life is a sacred journey, and hope is the light that guides us forward, even through the challenges and uncertainties we may encounter.

As we embark on this new year, let us walk together as **pilgrims of hope**, trusting in God's providence and carrying the light of Christ into the world. May our journey be marked by faith, generosity, and the joy of knowing that God is always with us. To remind us of the jubilee year, the logo of the jubilee will be displayed in front of the churches.

The logo shows four stylized figures, representing all of humanity, coming from the four corners of the earth. They embrace each other to indicate the solidarity and fraternity which should unite all peoples. The figure at the front is holding onto the cross. It is not only the sign of the faith which this lead figure embraces, but also of hope, which can never be abandoned, because we are always in need of hope, especially in our moments of greatest need. There are the rough waves under the figures, symbolising the fact that life's pilgrimage does not always go smoothly in calm waters.

As we journey through this Jubilee Year, let us:

Deepen our faith: Strengthen your relationship with Christ through prayer, the sacraments, and meditating on God's Word.

Live as witnesses of hope: Share the joy of the Gospel with those around you, especially the lonely, the suffering, and the marginalized.

Build a community of love: Be instruments of peace and unity within our parish and beyond, fostering bonds of solidarity and compassion.

May the Lord bless you and your families abundantly in the year ahead. Through the intercession of Our Lady and all the saints, may you find strength, peace, and renewed hope.

A blessed and joyful New Year to you all!

Fr Thomas Chirackal