

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

## The Presentation of the Lord, Year C

2 February 2025

### First Reading

**Malachi 3:1-4**

*A reading from the prophet Malachi.*

The Lord God says this: Look, I am going to send my messenger to prepare a way before me. And the Lord you are seeking will suddenly enter his temple; and the angel of the covenant whom you are longing for, yes, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. Who will be able to resist the day of his coming? Who will remain standing when he appears? For he is like the refiner's fire and the fuller's alkali. He will take his seat as refiner and purifier; he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and then they will make the offering to the Lord as it should be made. The offering of Judah and Jerusalem will then be welcomed by the Lord as in former days, as in the years of old.

The Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

### Responsorial Psalm Ps 23:7-10. R. v.10

**(R.) Who is this king of glory? It is the Lord!**

O gates, lift up your heads;  
grow higher, ancient doors.  
Let him enter, the king of glory! (R.)

Who is the king of glory?  
The Lord, the mighty, the valiant,  
the Lord, the valiant in war. (R.)

O gates, lift up your heads;  
grow higher, ancient doors.  
Let him enter, the king of glory! (R.)

Who is he, the king of glory?  
He, the Lord of armies,  
he is the king of glory. (R.)

### Second Reading

**Hebrews 2:14-18**

*A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.*

Since all the children share the same blood and flesh, Jesus too shared equally in it, so that by his death he could take away all the power of the devil, who had power over death, and set free all those who had been held in slavery all their lives by the fear of death. For it was not the angels that he took to himself; he took to himself descent from Abraham. It was essential that he should in this way become completely like his brothers so that he could be a compassionate and trustworthy high priest of God's religion, able to atone for human sins. That is, because he has himself been through temptation he is able to help others who are tempted.

The Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

### Gospel Acclamation

**Luke 2:32**

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

**This is the light of revelation to the nations,  
and the glory of your people Israel.**

**Alleluia!**

### Gospel

**Luke 2:22-32**

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

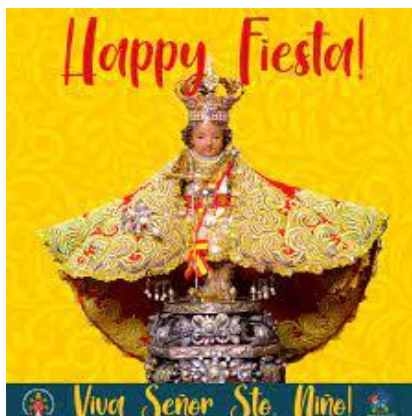
When the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses, the parents of Jesus took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord – observing what stands written in the Law of the Lord: Every first-born male must be consecrated to the Lord – and also to offer in sacrifice, in accordance with what is said in the Law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons. Now in Jerusalem there was a man named Simeon. He was an upright and devout man; he looked forward to Israel's comforting and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he had set eyes on the Christ of the Lord. Prompted by the Spirit he came to the Temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the Law required, he took him into his arms and blessed God; and he said:

'Now, Master, you can let your servant go in peace,  
just as you promised;  
because my eyes have seen the salvation  
which you have prepared for all the nations  
to see,  
a light to enlighten the pagans  
and the glory of your people Israel.'

The Gospel of the Lord

**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

Welcome to all who are attending  
St Patrick's Church this Sunday  
for the Parish Fiesta in Honour of  
Señor Santo Niño de Cebú.  
Have a wonderful celebration



### FRANCIS' FOCUS REFLECTION BY NICK BRODIE

Pope Francis draws our attention to the way that today's feast is about encounter. He is particularly interested in how this episode takes place 'between the young and the old'. This was a profound spiritual moment shared by 'two newlyweds,' as the Pope describes Mary and Joseph, and the elderly and faithful Simeon and Anna.

The Pope draws our attention to their respective dispositions. Mary and Joseph are not just going through the motions. They clearly really believe that what they are doing is important, even if they wonder what it all means.

Meanwhile, Simeon and Anna were clearly 'guided by the Holy Spirit' and 'full of life!' Their encounter was not only between generations, therefore, but was also what the Pope calls 'a unique encounter between observance and prophecy.'

'It's good for the elderly to communicate their wisdom to the young,' the Pope reminds us, 'and it's good for the young people to gather this wealth of experience and wisdom, and to carry it forward ... addressing the challenges that life brings.'

Perhaps we might pray this week for the wisdom to respond to the promptings of the Spirit, and for the Grace to leave a joyful mark on all the people we might encounter, young or old.

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<b>ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:</b> Your merciful love, O God, we have received in the midst of your temple. Your praise, O God, like your name, reaches the ends of the earth; your right hand is filled with saving justice. <b>COMMUNION ANTIPHON:</b> My eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in the sight of all the peoples.	<p><b><i>We remember in our prayers:</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Sick:</i></b> Lorraine Cooper, Jose De Sousa, Tony Ernst, Ron Hebbe, Austin Hoffman, Liz Matt, Indira Nanda, Allan Seque, Selene Stanholm-Atkins, Ross Timmins, Sharon Wood, Zoe. <b><i>Bring healing, comfort, and peace to their bodies. Send strength to their carers.</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Baptisms:</i></b> Willa and Navy Shearman (Branxton).</p> <p><b><i>Anniversaries:</i></b> Brian Dagg, Michael Dunn, Joyce Ralston.</p> <p><b><i>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.</i></b></p> <p><i>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.</i></p>
<b>NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURES</b> Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time, C <b>1st Reading:</b> Isaiah 6:1-8 <b>2nd Reading:</b> 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 <b>Gospel:</b> Luke 5:1-11	
<b>MYSTERY OF FAITH</b> <i>We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection, until you come again.</i>	

PARISH CONTACTS			
Parish Priest	<i>Rev Thomas Chirackal</i>	Presbytery: 6578 9651	Email: <a href="mailto:Thomas.chirackal@mn.catholic.org.au">Thomas.chirackal@mn.catholic.org.au</a>
Parish Secretary	<i>Mrs Erica Janssen</i>	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>
Facebook	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>			
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	
<b>St Brigid's Parish PLEASE PHONE THE PARISH OFFICE FOR BOOKINGS OF PARISH CHURCHES (5507 4048)</b>			
<i>Branxton</i>	St Brigid's Catholic Church	Station St, Branxton 2335	
<i>Greta</i>	St Catherine's Catholic Church	Branxton Street, Greta 2334	
<b>Schools in our Parishes</b>			
St. Catherine's Catholic College	<i>Principal: Mr Dave Crawford</i>	K-12 Office: 02 6578 9600	Email: <a href="mailto:admin@singleton.catholic.edu.au">admin@singleton.catholic.edu.au</a>
Rosary Park Catholic School	<i>Principal: Mr Ashley Borg</i>	K-6 Office: 02 4938 1541	Email: <a href="mailto:admin@branxton.mn.catholic.edu.au">admin@branxton.mn.catholic.edu.au</a>
St Nicholas Early Education Singleton	<i>Director: Ms Alex Stafford</i>	Office: 02 4015 2860	Email: <a href="mailto:singleton@stnicholasmn.org.au">singleton@stnicholasmn.org.au</a>
St Nicholas Early Education Branxton	<i>Director: Ms Stella Danks</i>	Office: 02 4931 1220	Email: <a href="mailto:branxton@stnicholasmn.org.au">branxton@stnicholasmn.org.au</a>

MASS ROSTER – SUNDAY 9 FEBRUARY 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	<b>VOLUNTEER NEEDED</b>	J Dries	J Dries	J Brackenrig
Commentator		L Gorczyca	G Cattermole		E Janssen	
Readers	H Hartcher C Trunk	L Harrison	<b>SCAE LEADER REQ</b> J Duldulao H Duldulao	M Stowe	T Janssen H Janssen N Janssen	
Prayers		L Gorczyca	P Boyd	F King	E Janssen	
Offertory	J Stafa S Stafa	D Clarke J Clarke	J Dunn M Jones	<b>VOLUNTEER NEEDED</b>	<b>VOLUNTEER NEEDED</b>	
Rosary Leader		L Gorczyca				

*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
3 February St Blaise St Ansgar	4 February	5 February St Agatha	6 February St Paul Miki and Companions	7 February	8 February St Jerome Emiliani St Josephine Bakhita	9 February FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR C
<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	<b>OFFICE OPEN</b>	<b>OFFICE OPEN</b>	<b>OFFICE OPEN</b>	<b>OFFICE OPEN</b>		
8.00am Mass St Patrick's Singleton	6.00pm LOTW St Patrick's Singleton	9.20am Mass St Patrick's Singleton	6.00pm Mass St Patrick's Singleton	9.20am Mass Adoration and Benediction St Patrick's Singleton	9.00am Novena 9.20am Mass St Patrick's Singleton	7.00am SCAE 10.00am Mass 6.00pm Mass St Patrick's Singleton
	NO MASS St Catherine's Greta		9.20am Mass St Brigid's Branxton		6.00pm Mass St Brigid's Branxton	7.35am Rosary 8.15am 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](mailto:childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au) or visit [www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au](http://www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au) for more information and resources.

## **2025 Parish Sacramental Program**

Expression of interests are being sought for children in Year 3 and above in 2025 who are ready to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation and Holy Communion. Please email the parish office with your child's name, date of birth and parish.

## **St Brigid's Caritas Luncheon**

The St Brigid's Caritas Group invite everyone to join them for lunch on Friday 21 February at Miller Park Hotel restaurant.

**Caritas** *kærɪˈtæəs*, noun, meaning Christianity | charity

## **World Day of Prayer - 2025**

The 2025 World Day of Prayer will be held on Friday 7 March at 10am in the Uniting Church, Branxton and at 7pm in All Saints Anglican Church. This year's country of focus is the Cook Islands. Attendees to both services are asked to bring a plate of food to share.

## **150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St Catherine's College Singleton**

2025 sees the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Sisters of Mercy developing the catholic education traditions at St Catherine's College in Singleton. A group of past and present staff and students are continuing the historical documentation that Pam Como began. They would love anything and everything that you may have from 1974 to the present. These could include personal stories, memorabilia, uniforms, awards, newsletters or anything of personal significance relating to the school. All items will be returned. Please drop any items to the Parish Office during office hours, clearly labelled with your name and contact details.

## **Formation Film - EDIE**

83-year-old Edie believes that it is never too late – packing an old camping bag, leaving her life behind and embarking on an adventure she never got to have – climbing the imposing Mount Suilven in Scotland. Lunch will be served after the film screening. Bookings Essential. The film will be shown on Saturday 1 March 2025 at 11am at the Diocesan Resource Centre, Corner of Tudor and Parry Streets, Newcastle West. Lunch, coffee and tea will be provided.

Registration: <https://www.mn.catholic.org.au/places/library/>

## **Caritas Australia – Gaza Crisis Appeal**

We urgently need your support. The ceasefire means more aid can assist people in Gaza, but the need is immense and the recovery long. Gaza's people cannot recover alone. They need the support of the global community to survive and rebuild.

**Please donate to Caritas Australia's Gaza Crisis Appeal.** You can donate online [www.caritas.org.au/gaza](http://www.caritas.org.au/gaza) or phone 1800 024 413

## **Welcome Back to School!**

Best wishes to all students and staff who are returning to school this week! May God bless the 2025 academic year and grant you all love for learning, packed with creativity, growth and friendship.

## **Diocesan Launch of the Jubilee Year**

Bishop Michael invites everyone to celebrate the Jubilee Year with a Diocesan pilgrimage on Sunday 2 March 2025 from Nobby's Beach (8am) to Sacred Heart Cathedral, culminating in Mass (10am) and a Festival (11am) in the Cathedral precinct grounds. The festival will feature an official Launch of *Project Compassion 2025* and distribution of some resources. All corners of the Diocese are encouraged to have representation and involvement as we mark Pope Francis' theme - *Pilgrims of Hope*. For more information email [mission@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:mission@mn.catholic.org.au)

## **The Great Warning Movie**

Kotara Event Cinemas Monday 24 February 2025, 6.30pm. To buy tickets and read a synopsis the movie head to [www.fan-force.com](http://www.fan-force.com) Under the Screenings menu, select The Great Warning - Kotara.

## **Symbolon – The Catholic Faith Explained**

MacKillop Parish presents Symbolon. It is a faith formation series presented by Dr. Edward Sri and a team of theologians from the Augustine Institute. It presents the various facets of the Church's teachings that have been in existence for over 2000 years. You are invited to come along to this free event which will run for 10 weeks starting on Wednesday, 5 February 2025 till Wednesday, 9 April 2025 from 6:30pm to 8:30pm, in the Function Room at St Mary of the Cross Parish Hub, Charlestown. Register at the door. Light refreshments will be served. Feel free to invite anyone you might know who may also be interested in learning more about the Catholic Faith. Please see the flyer and episode guide for more details. For more information, please contact Yvonne Rego on 0450 323 206.



## **The Sunday Readings**

Does your family enjoy looking back over treasured photo albums and retelling the stories behind the pictures? While every historical detail of your ancestry may not be recorded, the photos do capture the highlights and carry a 'sense' of your family's history, identity and values.

The scriptures are a bit like that. They are our faith family's 'photo album', the inspired recordings of our Christian ancestors, retelling the stories of God's revelation in their midst. As you listen to the readings each Sunday at the Liturgy of the Word, allow God to speak to you through the stories of your faith heritage.

## **Word of God Sunday**

The Church in Australia celebrates the Sunday of the Word of God on February 9 in 2025. Pope Francis established the day, which is devoted to "the celebration, study and dissemination" of the Word of God. Visit [www.catholic.org.au/wordofgodssunday](http://www.catholic.org.au/wordofgodssunday) to access resources and suggestions on how to better engage with Sacred Scripture in various ways and settings. Read Pope Francis' apostolic letter here



Saint Josephine Bakhita was born around the year 1869 at Dafur, in modern-day Western Sudan. She belonged to the Daju People. In 1877, when she was around 7 years old, Josephine was kidnapped by Arab slave traders. She was forced to walk about 970 kilometres, barefoot, to El-Obeid and was bought and sold twice before she arrived. Once again, during 1877 to 1889, she was sold again three more times between Africa and Europe. Josephine was finally given freedom when she was in Italy. Josephine Bakhita entered the novitiate of Canossian Sisters, at the Institute of St Magdalene of Canossa in Italy on 7 December 1893. Three years later she took her vows and was welcomed by Cardinal Sarto. In 1902 she was sent to the Canossian convent in Schio and during her 42 long years of stay there, she was employed as the cook, sacristan and portress, otherwise known as the doorkeeper. While doing these types of minor works she was frequently able have contact with the local community. During World War II she shared the fears and hopes of the town people, who considered her already a saint as they felt protected by her presence. Bombs, however, did not spare Schio, and yet, the devastation did not result in any casualties. Josephine spent her last days suffering with pain and sickness, but she was always cheerful.

If someone asked how she was going she would reply 'as the master desires'.

She died on 8 February 1947. Saint Josephine Bakhita is the patron of Sudan and more recently the patron of victims of modern slavery and human trafficking. On 1 October 2000 Josephine Bakhita was declared a saint by the Catholic Church and 8 February 2001 it was established as an Optional Memorial in the Australian liturgical calendar.

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking are critical issues on the international, national and Church radar. The Catholic Church has a strong commitment to eradicating modern slavery, a stance grounded in Catholic Social Teaching. "At its heart the call to eradicate modern slavery and human trafficking is a call to make a choice for respecting the intrinsic and inalienable dignity of every human person" (Archbishop Fisher, 2018). We acknowledge the impact that commercial activities, including ours, can have on vulnerable people through modern slavery practices. We have a responsibility to take practical action to manage these risks. The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle's Modern Slavery policy outlines the steps the diocese will take to work with other Catholic entities, suppliers, business partners and community stakeholders and employees to fulfil a common goal of ending modern slavery globally and protecting and respecting the freedom and dignity of people everywhere.

About Josephine, Pope Francis says:

*'(The Church) is charged with showing to all the path to conversion, which enables us to change the way we see our neighbours, to recognise in every other person a brother or sister in our human family, and to acknowledge his or her intrinsic dignity in truth and freedom. This can be clearly seen from the story of Josephine Bakhita, the saint originally from the Darfur region in Sudan who was kidnapped by slave-traffickers and sold to brutal masters when she was nine years old. Subsequently – as a result of painful experiences – she became a "free daughter of God" thanks to her faith, lived in religious consecration and in service to others, especially the most lowly and helpless. This saint, who lived at the turn of the twentieth century, is even today an exemplary witness of hope for the many victims of slavery; she can support the efforts of all those committed to fighting against this "open wound on the body of contemporary society, a scourge upon the body of Christ"*

(10 April 2014)