

First Reading

Sirach 27:4-7

A reading from the book of Ecclesiasticus.

In a shaken sieve the rubbish is left behind,
so too the defects of a man appear in his talk.

The kiln tests the work of the potter,
the test of a man is in his conversation.
The orchard where the tree grows is judged
on the quality of its fruit,
similarly a man's words betray what he feels.

Do not praise a man before he has spoken,
since this is the test of men.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 91:2-3. 13-16. R. See v.2

(R.) Lord, it is good to give thanks to you.

It is good to give thanks to the Lord
to make music to your name, O Most High,
to proclaim your love in the morning
and your truth in the watches of the night.
(R.)

The just will flourish like the palm-tree
and grow like a Lebanon cedar. **(R.)**

Planted in the house of the Lord
they will flourish in the courts of our God,
still bearing fruit when they are old,
still full of sap, still green,
to proclaim that the Lord is just.
In him, my rock, there is no wrong. **(R.)**

Second Reading

1 Cor 15:54-58

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

When this perishable nature has put on
imperishability, and when this mortal
nature has put on immortality, then the
words of scripture will come true: Death is
swallowed up in victory. Death, where is
your victory? Death, where is your sting?
Now the sting of death is sin, and sin gets
its power from the Law. So let us thank God
for giving us the victory through our Lord
Jesus Christ.

Never give in then, my dear brothers, never
admit defeat; keep on working at the
Lord's work always, knowing that, in the
Lord, you cannot be labouring in vain.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation Philipians 2:15-16

Alleluia, alleluia!

**Shine on the world like bright stars;
you are offering it the word of life.
Alleluia!**

Gospel

Luke 6:39-45

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Jesus told a parable to his disciples, 'Can one blind man guide another? Surely both will fall into a pit? The disciple is not superior to his teacher; the fully trained disciple will always be like his teacher. Why do you observe the splinter in your brother's eye and never notice the plank in your own? How can you say to your brother, "Brother, let me take out the splinter that is in your eye," when you cannot see the plank in your own? Hypocrite! Take the plank out of your own eye first, and then you will see clearly enough to take out the splinter that is in your brother's eye.

'There is no sound tree that produces rotten fruit, nor again a rotten tree that produces sound fruit. For every tree can be told by its own fruit: people do not pick figs from thorns, nor gather grapes from brambles. A good man draws what is good from the store of goodness in his heart; a bad man draws what is bad from the store of badness. For a man's words flow out of what fills his heart.'

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



**FRANCIS' FOCUS
REFLECTION BY NICK BRODIE**

'To go beyond instinct, to go beyond hatred,' Pope Francis suggests, is fundamental. However bad it gets, Jesus calls on us to see those who wrong us as God sees them: as creatures loved into existence, still capable of good.

Understandably, we find this challenging. But, as the Pope points out, Jesus faced such situations himself and shows us what turning the cheek really means.

By not trading strike for strike, Jesus avoids becoming like those who struck him in the first place. Jesus does not give in to injustice. Rather, he reveals it.

During his Passion, as the Pope explains, Jesus 'asks for an account of the wrong done to him.' He calls it out, gently but firmly. 'With his question,' the Pope affirms, 'Jesus denounces what is unjust. But he does so without anger, without violence, indeed with kindness.'

In any conflict, whether personal or international, we are therefore called to unmask the absurdity of hatred by being the 'one who has a greater inner strength,' to use our voice rather than fists, or gestures rather than words.

Ultimately, as the Pope declares: 'Turning the other cheek does not have to mean suffering in silence, giving in to injustice.' It means transforming the moment to bring light to the darkness.

© Nick Brodie

**scriptural
context**

Three texts; one lesson

Today's gospel is made up of three separate teachings of Jesus that have been put together by the gospel writer to convey a particular message. When taken together, the three teachings all shed light on the way believers influence one another in community. It is a call to witness to one another through actions as well as words. Before we seek to teach another we must ensure we have adequately learned the lesson ourselves. We must be self-appraising before we critique another. Finally, our actions towards one another are a reflection of our intentions; good actions come from goodness of the heart.

© The scriptural quotations are taken from the Jerusalem Bible, published and copyright 1966, 1967 and 1968 by Darton Longman and Todd Ltd and Doubleday & Co Inc, and used by permission of the publishers. The English translation of the Psalm Responses, the Alleluia and Gospel Verses, and the Lenten Gospel Acclamations, and the Titles, Summaries, and Conclusion of the Readings, from the Lectionary for Mass © 1997, 1981, 1968, International Committee on English in the Liturgy, Inc. All rights reserved. The prayers are from the English Translation of the Roman Missal © 2010 International Committee on English in the Liturgy Inc. (ICEL). All rights reserved.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: The Lord became my protector. He brought me out to a place of freedom; he saved me because he delighted in me.	We remember in our prayers: Sick: Cecily Agnew, Michael Agnew, Lorraine Cooper, Mary Della-ca, Jose De Sousa, Tony Ernst, Ron Hebbe, Austin Hoffman, Liz Matt, Dulcie Maynard, Indira Nanda, Jen Phillips, Allan Seque, Selene Stanholm-Atkins, Ross Timmins, Sharon Wood, Zoe. Bring healing, comfort, and peace to their bodies. Send strength to their carers.
COMMUNION ANTIPHON: I will sing to the Lord who has been bountiful with me, sing psalms to the name of the Lord Most High.	Recently Deceased: Libby Slattery (Mon 3 March Singleton Civic Centre 11am) Anniversaries: Teddy Trunk. 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.
NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURES Frist Sunday of Lent Time, C 1st Read: Deuteronomy 26:4-10 2nd Read: Romans 10:8-13 Gospel: Luke 4:1-13	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.
MYSTERY OF FAITH We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection, until you come again.	

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	Principal: Mr David Crawford	K-12 Office: 02 6578 9600	Email: admin@singleton.catholic.edu.au
Rosary Park Catholic School	Principal: Mr Ashley Borg	K-6 Office: 02 4938 1541	Email: admin@branxton.mn.catholic.edu.au

MASS ROSTER – SUNDAY 9 MARCH 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
Commentator		K Ingold	G Cattermole	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	E Janssen	
Readers	J Stafa M Thomas	SCAE LEADER REQ L Harrison	J Duldulao H Duldulao	M Stowe R James	T Janssen N Janssen	
Prayers		K Ingold	C Langford	F King	E Janssen	
Offertory	K Jones K Jones	D Clarke J Clarke	M George J Dunn	J Cowley C Becus	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	
Extraordinary Minister	S Purdon	C Miller	J Dunn	M Stowe	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	

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 3 March	Tuesday 4 March St Casimir	Wednesday 5 March ASH WEDNESDAY	Thursday 6 March	Friday 7 March St Perpetua & Felicity World Day of Prayer	Saturday 8 March St John of God	Sunday 9 March 1ST SUNDAY OF LENT YEAR C
OFFICE CLOSED	OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE OPEN		
8.00am Mass St Patrick's Singleton	6.00pm Mass 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 Mass 10.00am Mass 6.00pm Mass St Patrick's Singleton
5.30pm Sacramental Information Night St Brigid's Branxton	9.20am Mass St Catherine's Greta	6.00pm Mass St Brigid's Branxton	NO MASS St Brigid's Branxton		6.00pm Mass St Brigid's Branxton	7.35am Rosary 8.15am SCAE 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.

ASH WEDNESDAY MASS

Mass will be said on Ash Wednesday in Singleton at 9.20am and in Branxton at 6.00pm.

Changes this week

There will be no morning Mass in Branxton on Thursday 6 March as Fr Thomas will be attending a meeting at St Catherine's Catholic College Singleton.

2025 Parish Sacramental Program

Children in Year 3 and above in 2025 who are ready to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation and Holy Communion are invited to join the Parish Sacramental Program.

Branxton Parish will hold an information session on Monday 3 March 2025 at 5.30pm in St Brigid's Church.

Lenten Program Singleton

The Lenten Program will commence after Mass on Ash Wednesday and will be held each week after the Wednesday Mass. Booklets are available at the back of the church. More booklets available by contacting the Parish Office.

Farewell for Lydia Gorczyca

Lydia Gorczyca has been the sacristan for many years at St Catherine's Church Greta. She has also served on the Parish Pastoral Council and coordinated the Parish Sacramental Program. Her and her husband John will be leaving the parish in March to move into a beautiful village in Morpeth. To wish them both well a morning tea will be held after Mass in Greta on Sunday 2 March.

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, Singleton*. This year's country of focus is the Cook Islands. Attendees to both services are asked to bring a plate of food to share.

150th Anniversary of St Catherine's College Singleton

2025 sees the 150th 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.

Potential Cathedral Changes Being Considered

The Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle is currently facing a space constraint in the temporary crypt located under the altar in St. John the Baptist Oratory. You are invited to attend a briefing and feedback session regarding the Bishops Crypt on 11 March at 10am or 6pm in the Victor Peters Suite at Newcastle West. For more information please go to <https://www.mn.catholic.org.au/news-events/news/potential-cathedral-changes-being-considered/>

Rite of Election Mass

The Rite of Election on Sunday 9 March 2025 is an opportunity to welcome all catechumens who will be baptised in their parishes at the Easter Vigil [a catechumen is an unbaptised person whose search for meaning has brought them to the Catholic Church]. Please join in witness and prayerful support of those who choose to be Catholic within this Jubilee Year of Hope. It starts at 2.30pm at Sacred Heart Cathedral Newcastle West, followed by afternoon tea. RSVP for catering to E.mission@mn.catholic.org.au. Enquiries to Fiona P 0408 895 951.

Diocesan Pilgrimage 2025

Join us on pilgrimage this Jubilee Year with Bishop Michael Kennedy as we visit the biblical sites and spiritual heights of Greece, Turkey and Italy from 25 September to 12 October 2025.

Scan the QR Code or visit www.mn.catholic.org.au and click the 2025 Jubilee Year Information tile for more information, the application form, and costings.



IDEA FOR LENT

40 DAYS 40 ITEMS

Weds 5 March is the first day of Lent.

Here's a challenge for you!

Each day of Lent, remove one item from your closet that you no longer wear or need and put it into a bag. At the end of the 40 days, donate these items to a place that can share them with someone who can really use them!



Why ashes?

The ashes we receive on Ash Wednesday remind us of our mortality and symbolise the spirit of penance that marks the Lenten season. Ashes were commonly used in ancient religions (including Judaism) as an expression of sorrow and humiliation. In the early Church, Jewish converts introduced this practice into the Christian liturgy. By being marked with ashes, a Catholic today is recognised by the community gathered as one who has chosen to repent of sin and believe in the Good News. A sign to be worn with conviction!

**Message of the Holy Father Francis for Lent 2025,
Let us journey together in hope**

Dear brothers and sisters,

We begin our annual pilgrimage of Lent in faith and hope with the penitential rite of the imposition of ashes. The Church, our mother and teacher, invites us to open our hearts to God's grace, so that we can celebrate with great joy the paschal victory of Christ the Lord over sin and death, which led Saint Paul to exclaim: "Death has been swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" (1 Cor 15:54-55). Indeed, Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, is the heart of our faith and the pledge of our hope in the Father's great promise, already fulfilled in his beloved Son: life eternal (cf. Jn 10:28; 17:3).

This Lent, as we share in the grace of the Jubilee Year, I would like to propose a few reflections on what it means to **journey together in hope**, and on the summons to conversion that God in his mercy addresses to all of us, as individuals and as a community.

First of all, **to journey**. The Jubilee motto, "Pilgrims of Hope", evokes the lengthy journey of the people of Israel to the Promised Land, as recounted in the Book of Exodus. This arduous path from slavery to freedom was willed and guided by the Lord, who loves his people and remains ever faithful to them. It is hard to think of the biblical exodus without also thinking of those of our brothers and sisters who in our own day are fleeing situations of misery and violence in search of a better life for themselves and their loved ones. A first call to conversion thus comes from the realization that all of us are pilgrims in this life; each of us is invited to stop and ask how our lives reflect this fact. Am I really on a journey, or am I standing still, not moving, either immobilized by fear and hopelessness or reluctant to move out of my comfort zone? Am I seeking ways to leave behind the occasions of sin and situations that degrade my dignity? It would be a good Lenten exercise for us to compare our daily life with that of some migrant or foreigner, to learn how to sympathize with their experiences and in this way discover what God is asking of us so that we can better advance on our journey to the house of the Father. This would be a good "examination of conscience" for all of us wayfarers.

Second, to journey **together**. The Church is called to walk together, to be synodal. Christians are called to walk at the side of others, and never as lone travellers. The Holy Spirit impels us not to remain self-absorbed, but to leave ourselves behind and keep walking towards God and our brothers and sisters. Journeying together means consolidating the unity grounded in our common dignity as children of God (cf. Gal 3:26-28). It means walking side-by-side, without shoving or stepping on others, without envy or hypocrisy, without letting anyone be left behind or excluded. Let us all walk in the same direction, tending towards the same goal, attentive to one another in love and patience.

This Lent, God is asking us to examine whether in our lives, in our families, in the places where we work and spend our time, we are capable of walking together with others, listening to them, resisting the temptation to become self-absorbed and to think only of our own needs. Let us ask ourselves in the presence of the Lord whether, as bishops, priests, consecrated persons and laity in the service of the Kingdom of God, we cooperate with others. Whether we show ourselves welcoming, with concrete gestures, to those both near and far. Whether we make others feel a part of the community or keep them at a distance. This, then, is a second call to conversion: a summons to synodality.

Third, let us journey together **in hope**, for we have been given a promise. May **the hope that does not disappoint** (cf. Rom 5:5), the central message of the Jubilee, be the focus of our Lenten journey towards the victory of Easter. As Pope Benedict XVI taught us in the Encyclical *Spe Salvi*, "the human being needs unconditional love. He needs the certainty which makes him say: 'neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord' (Rom 8:38-39)". Christ, my hope, has risen! He lives and reigns in glory. Death has been transformed into triumph, and the faith and great hope of Christians rests in this: the resurrection of Christ!

This, then, is the third call to conversion: a call to hope, to trust in God and his great promise of eternal life. Let us ask ourselves: Am I convinced that the Lord forgives my sins? Or do I act as if I can save myself? Do I long for salvation and call upon God's help to attain it? Do I concretely experience the hope that enables me to interpret the events of history and inspires in me a commitment to justice and fraternity, to care for our common home and in such a way that no one feels excluded?

Sisters and brothers, thanks to God's love in Jesus Christ, we are sustained in the hope that does not disappoint (cf. Rom 5:5). Hope is the "sure and steadfast anchor of the soul". It moves the Church to pray for "everyone to be saved" (1 Tim 2:4) and to look forward to her being united with Christ, her bridegroom, in the glory of heaven. This was the prayer of Saint Teresa of Avila: "Hope, O my soul, hope. You know neither the day nor the hour. Watch carefully, for everything passes quickly, even though your impatience makes doubtful what is certain, and turns a very short time into a long one" (*The Exclamations of the Soul to God*, 15:3).

May the Virgin Mary, Mother of Hope, intercede for us and accompany us on our Lenten journey.

FRANCIS

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 6 February 2025 Memorial of St Paul Miki and Companions, martyrs.



Project Compassion Sunday
1st and 2nd of March 2025



This Lent, we are called to *Unite Against Poverty* through Caritas Australia's Project Compassion. By taking home a Project Compassion donation box or envelope, you'll be answering the Gospels' call to care for our global family and walk alongside the most vulnerable.

Your generous support this Lenten season will enable Caritas Australia to provide life-changing support to communities facing poverty, food insecurity, lack of education, and water shortages, while building resilience against future challenges. Together, through faith and action, we can bring compassion and opportunity to those most in need.

PLEASE DONATE TODAY

You can support Project Compassion 2025 through the donation boxes, envelopes or by scanning the QR code above or online at: caritas.org.au/project-compassion or by calling: 1800 024 413. Thank you for standing with us, as we *Unite Against Poverty this Lent*.