

Third Sunday of Advent, Year A

14 December 2025

First Reading **Isaiah 35:1-6, 10**
A reading from the prophet Isaiah

Let the wilderness and the dry-lands exult,
let the wasteland rejoice and bloom,
let it bring forth flowers like the jonquil,
let it rejoice and sing for joy.
The glory of Lebanon is bestowed on it,
the splendour of Carmel and Sharon;
they shall see the glory of the Lord,
the splendour of our God.
Strengthen all weary hands,
steady all trembling knees
and say to all faint hearts,
'Courage! Do not be afraid.
'Look, your God is coming,
vengeance is coming,
the retribution of God;
he is coming to save you.'
Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
the ears of the deaf unsealed,
then the lame shall leap like a deer
and the tongues of the dumb sing for joy,
for those the Lord has ransomed shall return.
They will come to Zion shouting for joy,
everlasting joy on their faces;
joy and gladness will go with them
and sorrow and lament be ended.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 145:6-10. R. see Is 35:4

(R.) Lord, come and save us.

It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever,
who is just to those who are oppressed.
It is he who gives bread to the hungry,
the Lord, who sets prisoners free. **(R.)**

It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind,
who raises up those who are bowed down,
the Lord, who protects the stranger
and upholds the widow and orphan. **(R.)**

It is the Lord who loves the just
but thwarts the path of the wicked.
The Lord will reign for ever,
Zion's God, from age to age. **(R.)**

Second Reading **James 5:7-10**
A reading from the letter of St James

Be patient, brothers, until the Lord's coming. Think of a farmer: how patiently he waits for the precious fruit of the ground until it has had the autumn rains and the spring rains! You too have to be patient; do not lose heart, because the Lord's coming will be soon. Do not make complaints against one another, brothers, so as not to be brought to judgement yourselves; the Judge is already to be seen waiting at the gates. For your example, brothers, in submitting with patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation **Is 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 **Matthew 11:2-11**
A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

John in his prison had heard what Christ was doing and he sent his disciples to ask him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or have we got to wait for someone else?' Jesus answered, 'Go back and tell John what you hear and see; the blind see again, and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised to life and the Good News is proclaimed to the poor; and happy is the man who does not lose faith in me.'
As the messengers were leaving, Jesus began to talk to the people about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swaying in the breeze? No? Then what did you go out to see? A man wearing fine clothes? Oh no, those who wear fine clothes are to be found in palaces. Then what did you go out for? To see a prophet? Yes, I tell you, and much more than a prophet: he is the one of whom scripture says: Look, I am going to send my messenger before you; he will prepare your way before you. I tell you solemnly, of all the children born of women, a greater than John the Baptist has never been seen; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he is.'

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



LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES

The third candle is lit, 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.

V Lord Jesus, your coming was foretold by the prophet Isaiah who proclaims 'Look, your God is coming, he is coming to save you.' (First Reading).

R. Come, Lord Jesus.

V Lord Jesus, you come among us now as the light of the world. James urges us to be patient and not to lose heart, the Lord's coming will be soon. (Second Reading).

R. Come, Lord Jesus.

V Lord Jesus, you will come again in glory and raise the dead to new life. (Gospel).

R. Come, Lord Jesus.



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.	<p>We remember in our prayers:</p> <p>Sick: Cecily Agnew, Michael Agnew, Mary Bailey, Sienna Baker, Chris Cantrall, Lorraine Cooper, Josè Joaquim De Sousa, Sullivan Hurn, Dulcie Maynard, Anne McAleer, Fleur McAlister, Indira Nanda, Jen Phillips, Marianne Reynolds, Allan Seque, Jenna Talbot, Carmel Tope, Sharon Wood, Zoe, Elizabeth and Dorothea. Bring healing, comfort, and peace to their bodies. Send strength to their carers.</p> <p>Recently Deceased: Austin Hoffman (Funeral Mass Tues 16 Dec, 11am Branxton), Nola Andrews, Tom Craig.</p> <p>Anniversaries: Lucian Gorczyca, Andrew Gorczyca, Paul O'Connor.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The list of Sick will be cleared on <u>19 December</u>, if you wish a name to remain, please contact the parish office.</p>
NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURES Fourth Sunday of Advent, Year A 1st Reading: Isaiah 7:10-14 2nd Reading: Romans 1:1-7 Gospel: Matthew 1:18-24	
MYSTERY OF FAITH When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim you Death, O Lord, until you come again.	

PARISH CONTACTS				
Parish Administrator	<i>Rev Thomas Chirackal</i>	Presbytery: 6578 9651		Email: Thomas.chirackal@mn.catholic.org.au
Parish Secretary	<i>Mrs Erica Janssen</i>	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: Allan Humphreys
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)				
<i>Branxton</i>	St Brigid's Catholic Church	Station St, Branxton 2335		
<i>Greta</i>	St Catherine's Catholic Church	Branxton Street, Greta 2334		
Schools in our Parishes				
St. Catherine's Catholic College		<i>Principal: Mr David Crawford</i>	K-12 Office: 02 6578 9600	Email: admin@singleton.catholic.edu.au
Rosary Park Catholic School		<i>Principal: Mr Ashley Borg</i>	K-6 Office: 02 4938 1541	Email: admin@branxton.mn.catholic.edu.au

MASS ROSTER – SUNDAY 21 DECEMBER 2025						
	Branxton Saturday 6pm	Greta Sunday 8.15am	Singleton Sunday 7am	Singleton Sunday 10am	Singleton Sunday 6pm	Counters 9.30am Tuesday
Welcomer	E Bendeich	D & J Clarke	C Langford	J Dries	J Dries	C Langford G McMillan
Commentator		K Ingold	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	
Readers	H Hartcher C Trunk	M Ingold	C Spiteri D Thompson	T Cochrane A Wall	SCCC Staff	
Prayers		K Ingold	E Thomas	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	SCCC Staff	
Offertory	M Thomas K Gould	Joan Jeanette	G Cattermole VOLUNTEER NEEDED	VOLUNTEERS NEEDED	SCCC Staff	
Extraordinary Minister		N/A	M Alsleben	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	M Cunningham	

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 15 December	Tuesday 16 December	Wednesday 17 December	Thursday 18 December	Friday 19 December	Saturday 20 December	Sunday 21 December FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR A
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>6.00pm</u> Mass Reconciliation St Patrick's Singleton	<u>9.20am</u> Mass St Patrick's Singleton <u>11.00am</u> Mass Elizabeth Gates	<u>9.00am</u> Novena <u>9.20am</u> Mass St Patrick's Singleton	<u>7.00am</u> Mass <u>10.00m</u> Mass <u>6.00pm</u> Mass St Patrick's Singleton
	<u>9.20am</u> Mass Reconciliation St Catherine's Greta		<u>9.20am</u> Mass Reconciliation St Brigid's Branxton		<u>6.00pm</u> Mass St Brigid's Branxton	<u>7.50am</u> Rosary <u>8.15am</u> 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 contact the Parish Office for a Welcome Pack, complete and return the Member forms and one of our welcoming team will contact you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Our parishes acknowledge the Traditional Custodians, the Wonnarua people, who have walked upon and cared for the land we meet on 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.

Parish Office Holiday Hours

The Parish Office will close from 3pm 24 December 2025 and re-open at 9am on Tuesday 6 January 2026. The bulletins for Christmas, 28/12 and 4/1 will be printed prior to the office closing. If you have any items, please send them by 9am Tuesday 23 December.

Greta Church Christmas Morning Tea

Morning Tea will be held after Mass this Sunday 14 December at St Catherine's Church Greta. This will be a chance to come together to celebrate the Advent and Christmas Season together. Please bring a plate to share.

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. *Mercia Thomas*

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. *Mercia Thomas*

Rosary Park Catholic School Farewell Mrs Dixon

You're invited to join the Rosary Park Catholic School community to celebrate and thank Mrs. Janelle Dixon for her incredible 27 years of service to the Greta and Branxton Catholic School communities. Mrs. Dixon is departing to take up the role of Acting Assistant Principal at St Patrick's Lochinvar.

All parishioners, past students, teachers, and families are invited for a special celebration.

When: Wednesday, 17 December

Time: Liturgy starts at 12:00 PM (Please arrive by 11:45am).

Where: Rosary Park Catholic School, Station Street

Followed by a small afternoon tea until 1:25pm to thank Mrs. Dixon in person.

RSVP essential by Monday, 15 December to

ashley.borg@mn.catholic.edu.au

God's Word 2026: Daily Reflections Liturgical Diary

Designed to help you to keep the Word of God close to your heart in your daily life. This edition was prepared for Australia and New Zealand and 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. A life-changing companion to nourish you, help make God's Word the foundation of your life, and empower you to pray, to live and to share your faith with others.

ONLY TWO COPIES LEFT - \$15.00 from Parish Office. St Paul's Publications has sold out of this popular resource.

Pilgrimage of the Migrant Jubilee Cross

The Migrant Jubilee Cross is making its way around Australia and will visit Maitland-Newcastle Diocese from 19-21 December 2025. The Migrant Jubilee Cross will arrive at our diocesan centre on Friday 19 December 2025. Join Bishop Michael Kennedy and representatives from our migrant communities for prayer and conversation. You can register following the links on the event page <https://mn.catholic.org.au/event> On Sunday 21 December 2025, the Migrant Jubilee Cross will be hosted at three community celebrations:

- **9.30am** Ukrainian Catholic Community – 105 Gosford Rd Adamstown
- **11.15am** Syro-Malabar Community – Our Lady of Victories Church, 262 Sandgate Rd, Shortland
- **6.00pm** Vietnamese Community – Holy Cross Church, 30 Oakland Street, Glendale

Sisters of Faith Dinner 2026

You are warmly invited to our Sisters of Faith Dinner on Wednesday 11 February 2026 from 6.30-9.00pm for an evening of friendship, reflection, and inspiring conversation that nourishes both heart and soul in the Victor Peters Suite, 841 Hunter St, Newcastle West. For more information on this popular annual event to purchase tickets, follow the links on the event page <https://mn.catholic.org.au/event>

Help Alleviate Poverty with Your Used Postage Stamps

The Mary Mackillop International Mission runs education programs for Peru's poor children and training programs for poor mothers to learn useful crafts to earn an income. Funds are raised for the mission by selling used postage stamps. Cut your stamps from envelopes leaving a margin around the edge and send to *John Altham, 17 Boronia St, Kyle Bay NSW 2221*.

Welcome Home This Christmas



At the back of each church, you will find *Welcome Home This Christmas* invitation cards. These invitations are for you, the members of our parish community, to invite your friends, family and neighbours to our Christmas gatherings. In a recent study, it was reported that 31% of non-church goers said that they would attend church if they were invited by a friend or family member. Consider who you would like to invite. Here's a little tool to use: Think of three people – someone you think

will say yes, someone who is a *maybe* and someone who is a definite *no*. And invite all three - **because you never know how God is moving.**

You get to write the details on the back of the card – not Fr Thomas, not the Parish Council or the Parish Office. And YOU are the contact.

This is the start of a journey, and it begins with an invitation – so, take a chance, who will you invite?

2026 Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) Course

The CPE Introductory course is run over a period of five weeks (each Monday), commencing on Monday 2 February 2026 at Mackillop Parish, Charlestown from 9am to 4pm. Topics covered include Pastoral Care, Listening, Self-Awareness, Grief, Healing & Illness and Community. The course is also a pre-requisite for anyone considering a role in hospital chaplaincy.

Enquiries for this course can be directed to Fr. Roger Zohrab rzohrab@bigpond.com

Find out more about Clinical Pastoral Education <https://www.nswccpe.edu.au/hunter-cpe-centre>

Jesus is coming to save us

Advent & Christmas

CHRISTMAS EVE

ST BRIGID'S BRANXTON **5.30PM**

ST PATRICK'S SINGLETON **7.30PM**

CHRISTMAS DAY

ST PATRICK'S SINGLETON **12.00AM**

ST CATHERINE'S GRETA **8.00AM**

ST PATRICK'S SINGLETON **10.00AM**



ADVENT RECONCILIATION

Reconciliation will be offered after Mass

ST CATHERINE'S, GRETA **16 DECEMBER**

ST BRIGID'S, BRANXTON **18 DECEMBER**

ST PATRICK'S, SINGLETON **18 DECEMBER**



Hope Tree Project 29: Help Build a Home for Bharath Kumar

Our current Hope Tree Group project is to support **Mr. Singarapu Bharath Kumar**, aged 26, of Chinthakani Parish, Khammam Diocese, Telangana, India.

Five years ago, on his way home from work, a serious accident left Bharath completely bedridden. He has undergone more than 20 major surgeries.

He was the sole earner for his family. After the accident, his wife left him. Now, his elderly parents and grandmother struggle daily, labouring in the fields, often forced to beg for money to cover Bharath's medicines and basic needs, while his father stays home to provide full-time care. They currently live in a temporary shed.

Construction had begun on a small, dignified house for them, using funds the local Sisters had been able to raise and a government grant, but the funds have now been exhausted.

URGENT NEED: ₹100,000 Rupees (or \$1800 AUD) is urgently needed to complete the brickwork. Finishing this stage is vital so they can then secure further government grants for the roofing. **\$1500 has been donated so far!**

Please help restore dignity and faith for Bharath and his devoted family by providing safe shelter for them.

Your generosity will make an immediate and lasting difference. Place donations in the Hope Tree boxes at church or go to <https://singletoncatholicparish.org.au/donate/> for bank account details.

