



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

Fourth Sunday of Advent, Year A

21 December 2025

First Reading **Isaiah 7:10-14**
A reading from the prophet Isaiah

The Lord spoke to Ahaz and said, 'Ask the Lord your God for a sign for yourself coming either from the depths of Sheol or from the heights above.' 'No', Ahaz answered 'I will not put the Lord to the test.'

Then Isaiah said:

'Listen now, House of David: are you not satisfied with trying the patience of men without trying the patience of my God, too? The Lord himself, therefore, will give you a sign. It is this: the maiden is with child and will soon give birth to a son whom she will call Immanuel, a name which means "God-is-with-us".'

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 23:1-6. R. see vv 7. 10

(R.) Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.

The Lord's is the earth and its fullness, the world and all its peoples. It is he who set it on the seas; on the waters he made it firm. **(R.)**

Who shall climb the mountain of the Lord? Who shall stand in his holy place? The man with clean hands and pure heart, who desires not worthless things. **(R.)**

He shall receive blessings from the Lord and reward from the God who saves him. Such are the men who seek him, seek the face of the God of Jacob. **(R.)**

Second Reading **Romans 1:1-7**
A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

Be patient, brothers, until the Lord's Coming. From Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus who has been called to be an apostle, and specially chosen to preach the Good News that God promised long ago through his prophets in the scriptures.

This news is about the Son of God, who, according to the human nature he took, was a descendant of David: it is about Jesus Christ our Lord who, in the order of the spirit, the spirit of holiness that was in him, was proclaimed Son of God in all his power through his resurrection from the dead. Through him we received grace and

our apostolic mission to preach the obedience of faith to all pagan nations in honour of his name. You are one of these nations, and by his call belong to Jesus Christ. To you all, then, who are God's beloved in Rome, called to be saints, may God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ send grace and peace.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation **Matthew 1:23**

Alleluia, alleluia!
A virgin will give birth to a son;
his name will be Emmanuel: God is with us.
Alleluia!

Gospel **Matthew 1:18-24**
A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but before they came to live together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a man of honour and wanting to spare her publicity, decided to divorce her informally. He had made up his mind to do this when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.' Now all this took place to fulfil the words spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and they will call him Emmanuel,

a name which means 'God-is-with-us'. When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do: he took his wife to his home.

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



LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES

The fourth candle is lit, which is often named the Angel Gabriel Candle for those messengers who bring God's Word into our world.

V Lord Jesus, your coming was foretold by the prophet Isaiah when he proclaimed 'The maiden is with child and will soon give birth to a son whom she will call Immanuel, a name which means God is with us.' (First Reading).

R. Come, Lord Jesus.

V Lord Jesus, you come among us now in your Word and Sacrament to give us the strength to live according to the Good News you revealed. (Second Reading).

R. Come, Lord Jesus.

V Lord Jesus, you will come in glory in the fullness of time because you are the Christ the one who has saved his people from their sins. (Gospel).

R. Come, Lord Jesus.



ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: Drop down dew from above, you heavens, and let the clouds rain down the Just One; let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.	<h2 style="margin: 0;">We remember in our prayers:</h2> <p>Sick: Cecily Agnew, Michael Agnew, Sienna Baker, Eunice Benn, Lorraine Cooper, Valerie Diputado, Fleur McAlister, Joanne Perrett, Jen Phillips, Carmel Tope, Sharon Wood. Bring healing, comfort, and peace to their bodies. Send strength to their carers.</p> <p>Baptisms: Amelie Kelley and Eliza Rajapakse (Singleton). Called by name to be a child of God.</p> <p>Anniversaries: Rev Thomas Purcell, Noeline Cattermole, Gordon Wright, Matthew Spiteri, Dulcie Standing, Marjorie Bendeich, Mary Cox.</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>
COMMUNION ANTIPHON: Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and his name will be called Emmanuel.	
NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURES The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph, Year A 1st Reading: Sirach 3:2-6. 12-14 2nd Reading: Colossians 3:12-21 Gospel: Matthew 2:13-15. 19-23	
MYSTERY OF FAITH <i>When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim you Death, O Lord, until you come again.</i>	

PARISH CONTACTS			
Parish Administrator	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: 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)			
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 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 28 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	J Woolley
Commentator		A Humphreys	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	H Rapp	
Readers	J Stafa M Thomas	D Clarke	S Bates N Alexandroy	L Stevenson H Saptitula	H Rapp O Brackenrig C Brackenrig	
Prayers		A Humphreys	H Duldulao	Donna	A Skardon	
Offertory	K Jones K Jones	Cecilia Helena	J Tindale E Thomas	VOLUNTEERS NEEDED	VOLUNTEERS NEEDED	
Extraordinary Minister		N/A	J Dunn	T Cochrane	C Tysoe	

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
22 December	23 December <i>St John of Kanty</i>	24 December	25 December <i>THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD (CHRISTMAS DAY)</i>	26 December <i>St Stephen The First Martyr</i>	27 December <i>St John, Apostle & Evangelist</i>	28 December <i>THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH, YEAR A</i>
OFFICE CLOSED	OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE CLOSED	OFFICE CLOSED		
8.00am Mass St Patrick's Singleton	6.00pm Mass St Patrick's Singleton	7.30pm Christmas Vigil Mass 12.00am Christmas Midnight Mass St Patrick's Singleton	10.00am Christmas Day Mass St Patrick's Singleton	NO MASS St Patrick's Singleton	9.00am Novena 9.20am Mass St Patrick's Singleton 6.00pm Mass Glendonbrook	7.00am Mass 10.00am SCAE 6.00pm SCAE St Patrick's Singleton
	9.20am Mass St Catherine's Greta	5.30pm Christmas Vigil Mass St Brigid's Branxton	8.00am Christmas Day Mass St Catherine's Greta		6.00pm SCAE St Brigid's Branxton	7.50am 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 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.

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*

St Patrick's Anniversary Mass

There will be no Anniversary Mass in January. January and February Anniversaries will be commemorated at our Mass on 1 February 2026.

We invite you to join us to bring your intentions and pray the Novena before Mass each Saturday morning from 9am. If you would like to join the roster of leaders for the Novena, please contact the Parish Office or speak with Frieda King.

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".

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*.

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>

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?

Bishop Michael's Christmas Message

'As we light the candles, sing carols, share meals and laughter, let us remember: the glory of Christmas shines brightest in our welcome. In the way we open our doors and our hearts.

So, to every family, every household and every single one of you: Welcome home. Welcome to the place where you are loved and accepted. Welcome to the embrace of Christ and his Church community.'

You can watch Bishop Michael's message by scanning this QR code or by going to <https://mn.catholic.org.au/christmas-2025/>

If you are travelling in the Maitland-Newcastle diocese this Christmas, you can find your closest Mass time by visiting <https://mn.catholic.org.au/christmas-mass-times/>

Watch:
Bishop Michael Kennedy's
Christmas message.
Scan the QR code



Join Us for Christmas

CHRISTMAS EVE

ST BRIGID'S BRANXTON **5.30PM**

ST PATRICK'S SINGLETON **7.30PM**

CHURCH ADDRESSES

ST PATRICK'S, SINGLETON

28 Queen Street, Singleton

ST BRIGID'S, BRANXTON

55 Station St, Branxton

ST CATHERINE'S, GRETA

49 Branxton St, Greta

CHRISTMAS DAY

ST PATRICK'S SINGLETON **12.00AM**

ST CATHERINE'S GRETA **8.00AM**

ST PATRICK'S SINGLETON **10.00AM**



This Christmas, we are inviting Australians to “be a light in the darkness” for families who are living through the trauma of war, displacement, and poverty. The intensity of the conflict in Ukraine has increased and more people are experiencing displacement and poverty.

But with your support, we can bring hope to these families. Our partner, Caritas Ukraine are on the ground working hard to prepare food kits, emergency shelter kits and psychosocial assistance to families facing adversity.

Donate today at

<https://www.caritas.org.au/christmas-appeal/be-the-light-in-darkness/>

Let us pray together for peace:

O God, creator of the world, who first revealed your love and salvation for humankind in and through the Jewish community, and who have revealed that peacemakers are to be called your children, grant we pray, that we may work without ceasing to establish that justice which alone ensures true and lasting peace. Amen.

Bishop Michael Kennedy
Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle
(15/12/2025)

