

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

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph, Year A

28 December 2025

First Reading Sirach 3:2-6. 12-14

A reading from the book of Ecclesiasticus

The Lord honours the father in his children, and upholds the rights of a mother over her sons.

Whoever respects his father is atoning for his sins, he who honours his mother is like someone amassing a fortune.

Whoever respects his father will be happy with children of his own, he shall be heard on the day when he prays.

Long life comes to him who honours his father, he who sets his mother at ease is showing obedience to the Lord.

My son, support your father in his old age, do not grieve him during his life.

Even if his mind should fail, show him sympathy, do not despise him in your health and strength; for kindness to a father shall not be forgotten

but will serve as reparation for your sins.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 127:1-5. R. see v.1

(R.) Happy are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways.

O blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways!

By the labour of your hands you shall eat. You will be happy and prosper. **(R.)**

Your wife like a fruitful vine in the heart of your house; your children like shoots of the olive, around your table. **(R.)**

Indeed thus shall be blessed the man who fears the Lord. May the Lord bless you from Zion all the days of your life! **(R.)**

Second Reading Colossians 3:12-21

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Colossians

You are God's chosen race, his saints; he loves you and you should be clothed in sincere compassion, in kindness and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive each other as soon as a quarrel begins. The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same. Over all these clothes, to keep them together and complete them, put on love. And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you were called together as parts of one body. Always be thankful.

Let the message of Christ, in all its richness, find a home with you. Teach each other, and advise each other, in all wisdom. With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God; and never say or do anything except in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Wives, give way to your husbands, as you should in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and treat them with gentleness. Children, be obedient to your parents always, because that is what will please the Lord. Parents, never drive your children to resentment or you will make them feel frustrated.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation Colossians 3:15. 16

Alleluia, alleluia!

May the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, and the fullness of his message live within you.

Alleluia!

Gospel Matthew 2:13-15. 19-23

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

After the wise men had left, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother with you, and escape into Egypt, and stay there until I tell you, because Herod intends to search for the child and do away with him.' So Joseph got up and, taking the child and his mother with him, left that night for Egypt, where he stayed until Herod was dead. This was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken through the prophet:

I called my son out of Egypt.

After Herod's death, the angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother with you and go back to the land of Israel, for those who wanted to kill the child are dead.' So Joseph got up and, taking the child and his mother with him, went back to the land of Israel. But when he learnt that Archelaus had succeeded his father Herod as ruler of Judaea he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he left for the region of Galilee. There he settled in a town called Nazareth. In this way the words spoken through the prophets were to be fulfilled:

He will be called a Nazarene.

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.



LEO'S LENS

REFLECTION BY NICK BRODIE

'The Spirit', Pope Leo tells us, 'sends us to continue the work of Christ in the world's peripheries, marked at times by war, injustice and suffering.' As followers of the Christ whose family fled persecution, we should always stand with the persecuted.

Our faith, the Pope reminds us, 'helps us to resist evil and to persevere in doing good.' But, he adds, it should also transform each one of us into 'an instrument of the salvation that even today God wishes to bring about in the world.'

The way of salvation which Christ calls us to follow, the Pope says, 'is fulfilled when we take responsibility and, with the compassion of the Gospel, care for the suffering of others.'

And we need not go far to do this, the Pope points out, because 'poverty, suffering and the desire for a greater hope have made their way to us.' The migrants we find in our communities, he says, who have fled violence and injustice and faced danger and sorrow 'cannot and must not find the coldness of indifference or the stigma of discrimination!'

In the face of hardening social attitudes towards migrants we Christians are called to 'open our arms and hearts to them, welcoming them as brothers and sisters, and being for them a presence of consolation and hope.'

[Quotes from Homily on the Jubilee of the Missionary World and Jubilee of Migrants, 5 Oct 2025: <https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/homilies/2025/documents/20251005-giubileo-mondo-missionario.html>]

© Nick Brodie

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: The shepherds went in haste, and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant lying in a manger. COMMUNION ANTIPHON: Our God has appeared on the earth, and lived among us.	<p><i>We remember in our prayers:</i></p> <p><i>Sick:</i> Cecily Agnew, Michael Agnew, Sienna Baker, Eunice Benn, Lorraine Cooper, Valerie Diputado, Fleur McAlister, Joanne Perrett, Jen Phillips, Carmel Tope, Sharon Wood. <i>Bring healing, comfort, and peace to their bodies. Send strength to their carers.</i></p> <p><i>Baptisms:</i> Yuna Koda (Glendonbrook). <i>Called by name to be a child of God.</i></p> <p><i>Anniversaries:</i> Mary Bonser, Kath Deaves, Tony Ernst, Pamela Davy.</p> <p><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></p> <p><small>© 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.</small></p>
NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURES The Epiphany of the Lord, Year A 1st Reading: Isaiah 60:1-6 2nd Reading: Ephesians 3:2-3. 5-6 Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12	
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	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 4 JANUARY 2026						
	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	No counting until Tuesday 6 January
Commentator		M Ingold	G Cattermole	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	
Readers	C Conroy S Stafa	L Harrison	J Tindale E Thomas	T Cochrane J Dyson	P Goodwin A Borg Kevin M	
Prayers		M Ingold	P Boyd	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	M Cunningham	
Offertory	C & A Trunk	Norma Helena	G Cattermole	VOLUNTEERS NEEDED	Kevin M Jonathon M	
Extraordinary Minister		N/A	M Alsleben	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	A Borg	

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 29 December <i>St Thomas Becket</i>	Tuesday 30 December	Wednesday 31 December <i>St Sylvester I</i>	Thursday 1 January SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD	Friday 2 January <i>St Basil & Gregory</i>	Saturday 3 January <i>The Most Holy Name of Jesus</i>	Sunday 4 January THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD, YEAR A
OFFICE CLOSED	OFFICE CLOSED	OFFICE CLOSED	OFFICE CLOSED	OFFICE CLOSED		
8.00am LOTW 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 SCAE 10.00am Mass 6.00pm Mass St Patrick's Singleton
	9.20am Mass St Catherine's Greta		9.20am Mass St Brigid's Branxton		6.00pm Mass 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.

I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and thank you for another enjoyable year in my position as Parish Secretary! Erica Janssen

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.

Combined Churches of Singleton Praise & Prayer Gathering

The Combined Churches of Singleton invite you to the annual Praise and Prayer Gathering on Sunday 4 January 2026 at 5pm in All Saints Anglican Church, High Street, Singleton. This is a chance to gather together as a community of believers to pray for our community for the year ahead.

St Brigid's Caritas Group Monthly Lunch

St Brigid's Caritas will meet for their next monthly lunch on Friday 16 January 2026 from 12pm in Miller Park Hotel. All are welcome to join them for lunch and fellowship.

It's Fiesta Time!

The 2026 Parish Fiesta in honour of Santo Niño (the child Jesus), will be held on Sunday 8 February commencing with Mass at 10am in St Patrick's Church and then to the Civic Centre for celebrations. ***In the coming weeks, you can put your name on the sheet at the back of the church if you will be joining the lunch and entertainment.*** There will be raffles on sale for the Fiesta with great prizes to be announced. For more information, please speak with Frieda King.

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>



As we stand at the threshold of a New Year, we give thanks to God for the gift of time and for His faithful presence with us through every joy and challenge of the past year. With gratitude, we acknowledge the significant progress made across our parish communities. We have moved forward toward greater financial stability through the sale of land adjacent to the school in Branxton, the sale of the Campbell Street building in Singleton, and the sale of parish land where the junior school once stood.

Practical improvements have also enhanced our worship and parish life. The upgrading of the audio-visual system and the installation of new fans at St Patrick's Church have made participation in the liturgy more comfortable and engaging. The painting and replacement of carpets at Branxton have given the church a fresh and welcoming look.

Looking ahead, we hope to take further steps toward economic viability through housing projects in Branxton and Singleton — two houses planned in Branxton and two duplexes on parish land, pending council approval.

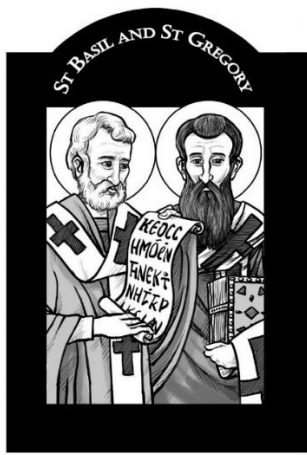
I sincerely thank all who work quietly behind the scenes: our sacristans, cleaners, decorators, lawn mowers, musicians, screen and sound operators, and our parish office administrator, Erica, whose efficiency keeps the parish running smoothly.

I encourage more parishioners to come forward and share their talents.

Our hope is not in our own strength, but in the Lord who walks with us and goes before us. This New Year invites us not only to turn a page on the calendar, but to renew our hearts, our faith, and our commitment to live as disciples of Christ. Let us entrust the year ahead to God's loving care, praying for the grace to grow in faith, compassion, and service, so that together we may be instruments of His peace and love.

I wish you a very happy new year!

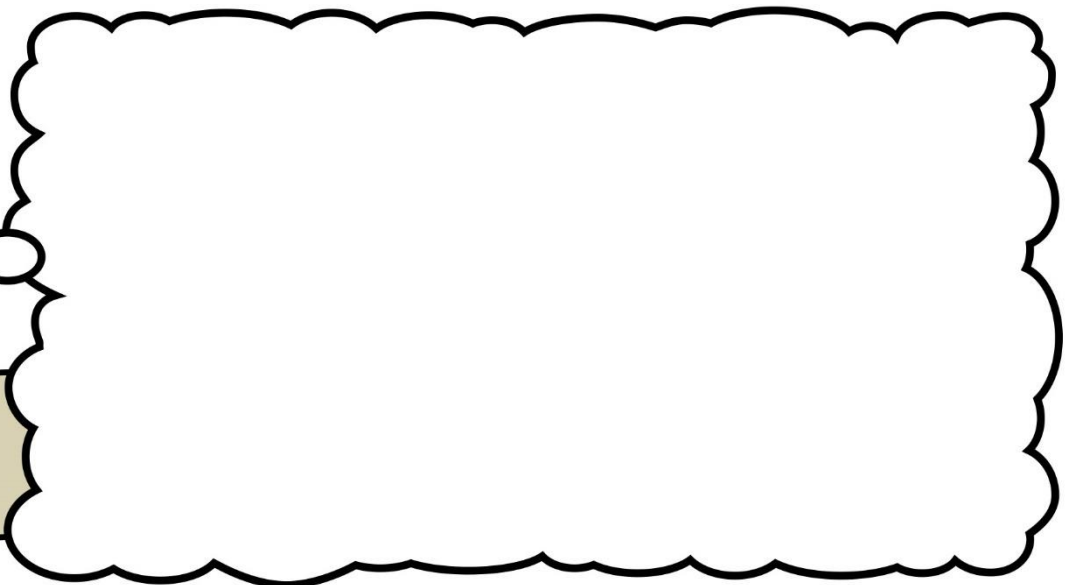
Fr Thomas



St Basil the Great was born in Caesarea, Cappadocia, c. 330, and befriended Gregory Nazianzen whilst attending school in Athens. In 357 he visited the chief monastic centres of the East and then settled as a monk at Annesi; monastic life of the Orthodox Church is still based on his principles. He was ordained bishop of Caesarea in 370. Basil empathised with the poor and downtrodden and was strongly opposed to the excesses of the wealthy.

St Gregory Nazianzen was born near Nazianzen (Menizi in Turkey) in c. 330. The son of a bishop, he was ordained a priest by his father in c. 362, and then made a bishop in c. 372 by his good friend Basil the Great. In 379 he became bishop of Constantinople but resigned within a few weeks to devote himself to contemplation and the writing of theological works. St Gregory Nazianzen is one of the four great doctors of the Eastern church.

An angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him to take Mary and Jesus to Egypt. Draw the angel speaking to Joseph in his dream.



DECODE THE PROPHECY

Use the code below to decipher the prophet's message

A		G		L		Q		V	
B		H		M		R		W	
C		I		N		S		X	
D		J		O		T		Y	
E		K		P		U		Z	
F									

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Joseph listened to the angel's warning because he trusted in God. Write down some of the names of those who you trust.