

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

**Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A**

**Word of God Sunday**

**1 February 2026**

**First Reading Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12-13**  
*A reading from the prophet Zephaniah*

Seek the Lord  
all you, the humble of the earth,  
who obey his commands.  
Seek integrity,  
seek humility:  
you may perhaps find shelter  
on the day of the anger of the Lord.  
In your midst I will leave  
a humble and lowly people,  
and those who are left in Israel will seek  
refuge in the name of the Lord.  
They will do no wrong,  
will tell no lies;  
and the perjured tongue will no longer  
be found in their mouths.  
But they will be able to graze and rest  
with no one to disturb them.

The Word of the Lord  
**Thanks be to God.**

**Responsorial Psalm**  
**Ps 145:7-10. R. Mt 5:3**

**(R.) Happy the poor in spirit;  
the kingdom of heaven is theirs!**

It is the Lord who keeps faith forever,  
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 1 Cor 1:26-31**  
*A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians*

Take yourselves, brothers, at the time  
when you were called: how many of you  
were wise in the ordinary sense of the  
word, how many were influential people, or  
came from noble families? No, it was to  
shame the wise that God chose what is  
foolish by human reckoning, and to shame  
what is strong that he chose what is weak  
by human reckoning; those whom the  
world thinks common and contemptible  
are the ones that God has chosen – those  
who are nothing at all to show up those  
who are everything. The human race has

nothing to boast about to God, but you,  
God has made members of Christ Jesus  
and by God's doing he has become our  
wisdom, and our virtue, and our holiness,  
and our freedom. As scripture says: if  
anyone wants to boast, let him boast about  
the Lord.

The Word of the Lord  
**Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel Acclamation Matthew 5:12**  
**Alleluia, alleluia!**  
**Rejoice and be glad;**  
**Your reward will be great in heaven.**  
**Alleluia!**

**Gospel Matthew 5:1-12**  
*A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew*

Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up the hill.  
There he sat down and was joined by his  
disciples. Then he began to speak. This is  
what he taught them:

'How happy are the poor in spirit:  
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
Happy the gentle:  
they shall have the earth for their  
heritage.  
Happy those who mourn:  
they shall be comforted.  
Happy those who hunger and thirst for  
what is right:  
they shall be satisfied.  
Happy the merciful:  
they shall have mercy shown them.  
Happy the pure in heart:  
they shall see God.  
Happy the peacemakers:  
they shall be called sons of God.  
Happy those who are persecuted in the  
cause of right:  
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
'Happy are you when people abuse you  
and persecute you and speak all kinds of  
calumny against you on my account.  
Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be  
great in heaven.'

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

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Psalm Responses, the Alleluia and Gospel Verses, and the  
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**LEO'S LENS**  
**REFLECTION BY NICK BRODIE**

It is hard to be a peacemaker in an age of  
conflict and division, but this is just what we  
are all called to be. One of the best ways for  
us Christians to be peacemakers is, as Pope  
Leo says, 'to love and nurture fraternity'.

'Fraternity', the Pope points out, 'stems from  
something deeply human.' As he suggests, 'it  
is certain that our humanity is best fulfilled  
when we exist and live together.' Fraternity is  
a calling, written in our being by our Maker.

Jesus shows us how to fulfil that calling. As  
the Pope says, 'to overcome the shadows  
that threaten it, we need to go to the source,  
and above all to draw light and strength from  
Him who alone frees us from the poison of  
enmity.'

Following his predecessor, Pope Francis,  
Pope Leo also encourages us to look to the  
witness of St Francis of Assisi whose  
approach to others was 'the inclusive way'. St  
Francis of Assisi 'placed all human beings on  
the same level, precisely because he  
recognised them in their common destiny of  
dignity, dialogue, welcome and salvation.'

As the Pope affirms, the welcoming of others  
signifies 'a universal fraternity', and thereby  
'expresses an essential feature of  
Christianity'.

Jesus' call to his followers is to become a  
blessing for others, proclaimers 'of the Good  
News destined for the salvation of all.'

[Quotes from General Audience, 12 November  
2025: <https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/audiences/2025/documents/20251112-udienza-generale.html>]

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<b>ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:</b> Save us, O Lord our God! And gather us from the nations, to give thanks to your holy name, and make it our glory to praise you.  <b>COMMUNION ANTIPHON:</b> Let your face shine on your servant. Save me in your merciful love. O Lord, let me never be put to shame, for I call on you.	<p><b>We remember in our prayers:</b></p> <p><b>Sick:</b> Cecily Agnew, Michael Agnew, Sienna Baker, Eunice Benn, Lorraine Cooper, José Joaquim De Sousa, Valerie Diputado, Fleur McAlister, Joanne Perrett, Jen Phillips, Sharon Wood, Donald, Xi, Susie, Vladimir and Charles. <b>Bring healing, comfort, and peace to their bodies. Send strength to their carers.</b></p> <p><b>Baptisms:</b> Savannah McDonald (Branxton). Louis Longbottom (Singleton). <b>Called by name to be a child of God.</b></p> <p><b>Anniversaries:</b> Francis Trunk.</p> <p><b>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.</b></p>
<b>NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURES</b> Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A <b>1st Reading:</b> Isaiah 58:7-10 <b>2nd Reading:</b> 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 <b>Gospel:</b> Matthew 5:13-16	
<b>MYSTERY OF FAITH</b> <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	<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: Allan Humphreys	
<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 David 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>

MASS ROSTER – SUNDAY 8 FEBRUARY 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	Tuesday 3 February J Brackenrig
Commentator		M Ingold	G Cattermole	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	E Janssen	
Readers	P Conroy H Hartcher	L Harrison	J Duldulao H Duldulao	M Stowe R James	T Janssen H Janssen N Janssen	
Prayers		M Ingold	C Langford	F King	E Janssen	
Offertory	K Gould M Thomas	Colleen Joan	M George J Dunn	J Cowley C Becus	VOLUNTEERS NEEDED	
Extraordinary Minister	N/A	N/A	J Dunn	M Stowe	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
<b>2 February</b> PRESENTATION OF THE LORD	<b>3 February</b> St Blaise St Angsari	<b>4 February</b>	<b>5 February</b> St Agatha	<b>6 February</b> St Paul Miki & Companions	<b>7 February</b>	<b>8 February</b> FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, 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 St Patrick's Singleton	<u>9.20am</u> Mass Adoration & Benediction St Patrick's Singleton	<u>9.00am</u> Novena <u>9.20am</u> Mass 1 <sup>st</sup> Anniversary St Patrick's Singleton	<u>7.00am</u> Mass <u>10.00am</u> Mass FIESTA <u>6.00pm</u> Mass St Patrick's Singleton
	<u>9.20am</u> Mass St Catherine's Greta		<u>9.20am</u> Mass 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**

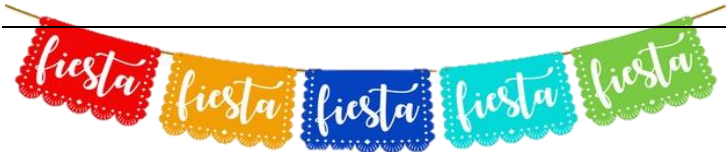
The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle has an abiding commitment to promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults. Information brochures are available in the entrance to the church. If you have any concerns for a child or vulnerable adult, contact the Office of Safeguarding 02 49791390 or [childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au) or visit [www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au](http://www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au) for more information and resources.

## **St Patrick's 1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary Mass**

The 1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary Mass will be held on Saturday 7 February 2026 at 9.20am. We will be offering Mass for *Robert Lancaster* and all those whose anniversaries occur in January and February.

## **St Patrick's Novena**

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.



## **It's Fiesta Time!**

The 2026 Parish Fiesta in honour of Santo Niño (the child Jesus), will be held on Sunday 8 February 2026 commencing with Mass at 10am in St Patrick's Church and then to the Civic Centre for celebrations. **You can put your name on the sheet at the back of the church if you will be joining the lunch and entertainment.** Raffles on sale for the Fiesta with these great prizes up for grabs:

- Furi Pro 7 Piece Knife Block Set valued at \$669
- AIWA Party Speaker with disco light show valued at \$199
- Cash prize valued at \$100
- And many more consolation prizes.

For more information, please speak with Frieda King.

## **Singleton Senior Singles Lunch**

The Singleton Senior Singles will hold their monthly lunch on Tuesday 10 February at 12pm in the Albion Hotel Restaurant. Any seniors on their own are welcome to join the group for lunch.

## **St Patrick's Women's Guild Meeting**

The Women's Guild will hold their monthly meeting on Wednesday 11 February at 1.30pm in the home of Jennifer Tindale, 23 Oldknow Cres, Singleton Heights. New members most welcome.

## **Greta-Branxton St Vincent de Paul Conference Needs You!**

As North Rothbury and Huntlee continue to grow, so does the need for Vinnies' services. The Greta-Branxton St Vincent de Paul Conference are looking for new members to help manage this growth and serve our local community. Whether you have experience in charity work or just want to give back, they'd love to hear from you. Contact Alan for more details on 0417 832 030

## **World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life**

World Day for Consecrated Life will be celebrated in the Church on 2 February 2026 and in parishes over the weekend of 31 January-1 February. Please pray for all those who have made commitments in the consecrated life, and be sure to thank them on their special day. May they continue to be inspired by Jesus Christ and respond generously to God's gift of their vocation.

## **2028 Sydney International Eucharistic Congress**

The Vatican has announced that Sydney will host the 54th International Eucharistic Congress in 2028. Held every four years, the International Eucharistic Congress is expected to draw tens of thousands of faithful Catholics from across the globe to Sydney. Catholic Archbishop of Sydney Anthony Fisher OP said the congress would be the largest gathering held on Australian shores since World Youth Day 2008. "The International Eucharistic Congress is a joyous occasion that will deepen our understanding of the truth of the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist," he said.

Sunday, 1 March 2026, has been chosen as the day to launch the 2028 Sydney International Eucharistic Congress as part of the three-year journey towards the congress 2026 - 2027 - 2028 with each year having a particular focus.

Bishop Michael has an expectation that each Parish in the Diocese will hold a **Holy Hour of Eucharistic Adoration** immediately Mass on Sunday 1 March. The Gospel for the Second Sunday of Lent is the Transfiguration; it is hoped that we all might be united in praying for a eucharistic transfiguration of our lives and country.

**Please let Fr Thomas know if you can lead the adoration in Singleton, Greta or Branxton**

## **SPOTLIGHT ON SAFEGUARDING**

### **Our commitment**

The Diocese is committed to making sure:

1

My community is a safe place where I feel respected and heard



2



There are people around me who know how to keep me safe

3

The grown-ups in my community check to make sure it is a safe place



4



Everyone follows the rules\*



\* NSW Child Safe Standards and the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards



[officeofsafeguarding.org.au](http://officeofsafeguarding.org.au)





## Word of God Sunday Reflection

*Word of God Sunday* invites us to pay special attention to the Word of God that we hear in that Sunday's Liturgy of the Word. When Pope Francis established this Sunday as a way of highlighting the Scriptures, he wanted us to realise that the Scriptures come out of the lives of people living their faith in God through history. So, Pope Francis says "Biblical faith is based on the living word, not a book".

This word, when we listen carefully to it, open to its deeper meanings, is able to help us live our faith here and now, in turn. That is because, through the Holy Spirit who inspired the writers of the Scriptures, the word always speaks to us now. It is not just telling us ancient history: it speaks to our experience of living in faith, now. It speaks to us as a community gathered but also to each of us individually.

This year on Word of God Sunday we hear the readings chosen for the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord. The first words we hear, from the prophet Malachi, set us up to receive a message from God. "See," the prophet says, speaking for God, "I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple."

When the prophet Malachi wrote these words, he envisaged the God of Israel coming to the temple in Jerusalem to encounter the people directly. At that time, the prophet envisaged God coming to sort out things that were wrong among the people of Israel, so that the temple offerings the people made would be truly acceptable to God.

Imagine if God were suddenly to appear in your eucharistic gathering on this Sunday! Imagine the shock of God's immense presence abruptly occupying your gathering space! What a disruption it would cause, overturning all our ordinary Sunday behaviours. Imagine the sense of God, as intense as fire that can melt silver, gathering your community to Godself as one body of people yet connecting directly, deeply, personally with each person. This is what Malachi's word, speaking to us now, invites us to envisage. Imagine it; sit in the experience, soaking it in.

And then ask yourself "who is the messenger that God has sent to prepare the way for God to come to me?" For each of us the answer will be unique. It might be a child who spoke an innocent truth that shook me. It might be a stranger who was kind just out of generosity. It might be an awful shock or loss that woke me up to what really matters in life. It might be an unexpected joy that has lifted me up so that I want to tell everybody about it.

Above all, as Christians, we believe it is Jesus who is the messenger of God, about whom we hear in the readings from Hebrews and the Gospel. What both these readings insist on is that Jesus lived our life, here in this world, from babyhood, through regular human growth, and then serious adult suffering, death and resurrection. This makes our human life, and my own individual life, matter.

Imagine living till next Sunday in that sense of God so present you could almost smell God, God who conveys to you that you utterly matter. Praise God!

*Michele A. Connolly rsj*  
*1 February 2025*

***In September 2019, Pope Francis instituted the celebration of Word of God Sunday when issuing the apostolic letter *Aperuit Illis*. The letter encouraged the celebration, study and dissemination of the Word of God. The Catholic Church in Australia celebrates Word of God Sunday on 1 February in 2026. Many countries celebrate the occasion on the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time.***