



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

First Sunday of Lent, Year A

22 February 2026

First Reading **Genesis 2:7-9; 3:1-7**
A reading from the book of Genesis

The Lord God fashioned man of dust from the soil. Then he breathed into his nostrils a breath of life, and thus man became a living being.

The Lord God planted a garden in Eden which is in the east, and there he put the man he had fashioned. The Lord God caused to spring up from the soil every kind of tree, enticing to look at and good to eat, with the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the middle of the garden.

The serpent was the most subtle of all the wild beasts that the Lord God had made. It asked the woman, 'Did God really say you were not to eat from any of the trees in the garden?' The woman answered the serpent, 'We may eat the fruit of the trees in the garden. But of the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden God said, "You must not eat it, nor touch it, under pain of death".' Then the serpent said to the woman, 'No! You will not die! God knows in fact that on the day you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods, knowing good and evil.' The woman saw that the tree was good to eat and pleasing to the eye, and that it was desirable for the knowledge that it could give. So she took some of its fruit and ate it. She gave some also to her husband who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they realised that they were naked. So they sewed fig-leaves together to make themselves loin-cloths.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm
Ps 50:3-6. 12-14. 17. R. see v.3

(R.) Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness. In your compassion blot out my offence. O wash me more and more from my guilt and cleanse me from my sin. **(R.)**

My offences truly I know them; my sin is always before me. Against you, you alone, have I sinned; what is evil in your sight I have done. **(R.)**

A pure heart create for me, O God, put a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, nor deprive me of your holy spirit. **(R.)**

Give me again the joy of your help; with a spirit of fervour sustain me. O Lord, open my lips and my mouth shall declare your praise. **(R.)**

Second Reading **Romans 5:12-19**
A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

Sin entered the world through one man, and through sin death, and thus death has spread through the whole human race because everyone has sinned. Sin existed in the world

long before the Law was given. There was no law and so no one could be accused of the sin of 'law-breaking', yet death reigned over all from Adam to Moses, even though their sin, unlike that of Adam, was not a matter of breaking a law.

Adam prefigured the One to come, but the gift itself considerably outweighed the fall. If it is certain that through one man's fall so many died, it is even more certain that divine grace, coming through the one man, Jesus Christ, came to so many as an abundant free gift. The results of the gift also outweigh the results of one man's sin: for after one single fall came judgement with a verdict of condemnation, now after many falls comes grace with its verdict of acquittal. If it is certain that death reigned over everyone as the consequence of one man's fall, it is even more certain that one man, Jesus Christ, will cause everyone to reign in life who receives the free gift that he does not deserve, of being made righteous. Again, as one man's fall brought condemnation on everyone, so the good act of one man brings everyone life and makes them justified. As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation **Matthew 4:4**

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

No one lives on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

Gospel **Matthew 4:1-11**
A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Jesus was led by the Spirit out into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, after which he was very hungry, and the tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to turn into loaves.' But he replied, 'Scripture says:

Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'

The devil then took him to the holy city and made him stand on the parapet of the Temple. 'If you are the Son of God,' he said, 'throw yourself down; for scripture says:

He will put you in his angels' charge, and they will support you on their hands in case you hurt your foot against a stone.'

Jesus said to him, 'Scripture also says: You must not put the Lord your God to the test.'

Next, taking him to a very high mountain, the devil showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. 'I will give you all these', he said, 'if you fall at my feet and worship me.' Then Jesus replied, 'Be off, Satan! For scripture says:

You must worship the Lord your God, and serve him alone.' Then the devil left him, and angels appeared and looked after him.

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.



LEO'S LENS
REFLECTION BY NICK BRODIE

'Our Christian faith, founded upon Christ's Paschal mystery,' Pope Leo says, 'helps us to experience ... hope for the future.' We are called to be a people who are open to 'looking forward towards the goal of our journey, towards the safe harbour that God has promised us, towards the unending feast that awaits us.'

'This final destination, this banquet around which the Lord will gather us,' the Pope reflects 'will be an encounter of love.'

With this in mind, we might do well to start our Lenten journey by reflecting that our purpose is love, our goal is love, indeed our innermost calling – is love.

'For it was out of love that God created us,' the Pope continues, 'through the love of his Son that he saves us from death, and in the joy of that same love, he desires that we live forever with him.'

'For this reason,' the Pope reflects, 'whenever we dwell in love and show charity to others, especially the weakest and most needy, then we can journey towards our goal.' In doing so, we are manifesting God's love in the world.

'Love conquers death', the Pope reminds us, adding that 'if we journey together in charity, our very lives become a prayer rising up to God.'

[Quotes from Homily for the Commemoration of the Faithful Departed, 2 November 2025: <https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/homilies/2025/documents/20251102-messa-fedeli-defunti.html>]

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ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: When he calls on me, I will answer him; I will deliver him and give him glory, I will grant him length of days.	<h2 style="margin: 0;">We remember in our prayers:</h2> <p>Sick: Cecily Agnew, Michael Agnew, Sienna Baker, Eunice Benn, Lorraine Cooper, José Joaquim De Sousa, Fleur McAlister, Joanne Perrett, Jen Phillips, Paul Ruigrok, Vincent Smolenaers, Sharon Wood, Elizabeth and Dorothea. Bring healing, comfort, and peace to their bodies. Send strength to their carers.</p> <p>Baptisms: Theodore Boyd (Greta). Called by name to be a child of God.</p> <p>Recently Deceased: Andrew Dunlop (Melbourne)</p> <p>Anniversaries: Cecil Thomas, Ted Trunk, Edna Wilton.</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: One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God	
NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURES Second Sunday of Lent, Year A 1st Reading: Genesis 12:1-4 2nd Reading: 2 Timothy 1:8-10 Gospel: Matthew 17:1-9	
MYSTERY OF FAITH <i>When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim you Death, O Lord, until you come again.</i>	<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>

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 1 MARCH 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	<i>Tuesday 24 Feb J Woolley</i>
Commentator		A Humphreys	G Cattermole	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	
Readers	P Conroy S Purdon	M Ingold	J Tindale E Thomas	T Cochrane J Dyson	P Goodwin Kevin M A Borg	
Prayers		A Humphreys	P Boyd	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	M Cunningham	
Offertory	M Thomas K Gould	Norma Joan	G Cattermole	VOLUNTEERS NEEDED	Kevin and Jonathon	
Extraordinary Minister	N/A	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	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
23 February <i>St Polycarp</i>	24 February	25 February	26 February	27 February <i>St Gregory</i>	28 February	1 March SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT, YEAR A
OFFICE CLOSED	OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE OPEN		
<u>8.00am</u> Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	<u>6.00pm</u> Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	<u>9.20am</u> Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	<u>6.00pm</u> Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	<u>9.20am</u> Anointing Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	<u>9.00am</u> Novena <u>9.20am</u> Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>	<u>7.00am</u> SCAE <u>10.00am</u> Mass <i>Holy Hour</i> <u>6.00pm</u> Mass <i>St Patrick's Singleton</i>
	<u>9.20am</u> Mass <i>St Catherine's Greta</i>		<u>9.20am</u> Mass <i>St Brigid's Branxton</i>		<u>6.00pm</u> Mass <i>St Brigid's Branxton</i>	<u>7.50am</u> Rosary <u>8.15am</u> Mass <i>St Catherine's Greta</i>

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.

Compassio Lenten Program Book

The Compassio Lenten Program books from the Diocese of Wollongong have been very popular and have sold out. However, digital copies are available to purchase from <https://www.dow.org.au/shop/>. Singleton Parish will be holding a Reflection group after 9.20am Mass on Wednesdays and will use the book at these sessions. Way of the Cross will be held on Fridays after Mass.

World Day of Prayer 2026 – Focus on Nigeria

The 2025 World Day of Prayer will be held on Friday 7 March. Services will be held at 10am in the *Anglican Church, Branxton* and at 7pm in *Generate Church, Singleton*. This year's country of focus is on Nigeria. Attendees at Branxton are asked to bring a plate of food to share. For more information visit <https://www.worlddayofprayeraustralia.org/wdp/>

To Serve at the Altar is to Serve Christ!

Behind every beautiful Mass at St Brigid's is a Sacristan - a quiet guardian ensuring every candle is lit, every vessel is prepared, and the sanctuary is ready for prayer. We are looking for new volunteers to continue this vital ministry. To make the transition smooth, we are offering a mentorship period starting now. You will train alongside Sue through the Lenten season, gaining the confidence and skills needed to step into the role after Easter Sunday. This doesn't have to be a weekly commitment! The role can easily be shared on a roster between 2 or 3 volunteers. If you seek a way to give back to the parish in a quiet, reflective environment, this ministry is a perfect fit. If you are interested, please contact the Parish Office or speak with Fr Thomas or Sue after Mass

Enrol for the 2026 Parish Sacramental Program

Is your child ready to take the next step in their faith? We are delighted to announce that expressions of interest are now open for the **2026 Parish Sacramental Program**. This is a special time for our young parishioners to grow closer to God through the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation, and First Holy Communion. We invite all families to join us in supporting these children as they begin this grace-filled journey. To be eligible for the 2026 program, children must be currently in **Year 3 or above** and must be **Baptised in the Catholic Church**. Note: We also warmly welcome children wishing to be Baptised into the Catholic faith to join this cohort.

Please contact the Parish Office to place your child's name on the list by emailing or phoning during office hours (see page 2 for contact details).



2028 Sydney International Eucharistic Congress

In 2028, Australia will host a landmark moment as Sydney hosts the International Eucharistic Congress (Eucharist28). This is more than a single event. It marks the beginning of a journey of renewal, transformation and mission, centred on an encounter with Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. A moment to believe. The journey has begun. Join us at eucharist28.org.

To mark the national launch of **Eucharist28**, St Patrick's Parish will hold a Holy Hour of Eucharistic Adoration on Sunday, 1 March 2026, immediately following the 10.00am Mass. This launch is a national moment of unity; let's come together before the Blessed Sacrament to pray for our parish, our city, and our world.

Thank You from Catholic Mission

Catholic Mission would like to thank all our parishioners for your extraordinary generosity and commitment to World Mission collection in 2025. Your prayers and donations are a powerful expression of faith in action, for our projects in Zambia. Looking ahead to 2026, this year marks the **100 years of World Mission Sunday**, and Pope Leo has declared the theme as *One in Christ, United in Mission*. This historic year will see renewed mission efforts, particularly in Africa, supporting communities through education and long-term development. More details about these mission projects will be shared later in the year. Thank you for continuing to be part of this global mission of hope.

Become an SRE Teacher – Share Faith, Bring Hope

Monday 2 March 1-3pm

Mullane Room, 841 Hunter St Newcastle West

Our parishes are looking for generous hearts to join our team of Special Religious Education (SRE) teachers. This beautiful ministry allows you to share the love of Jesus with children in our local public schools, offering them encouragement, connection, and a sense of belonging. If you've ever felt a nudge to serve, this is a wonderful place to begin. All training, support, and resources are provided – you simply bring your witness and willingness. Come along, meet the team, and discover how your "yes" could make a real difference in a child's life. Contact Nicola Graham 0417 773 444 nicola.graham@mn.catholic.org.au

ACBC Social Justice Statements 2026

This year, the Australian bishops have chosen to release two Social Justice Statements – one in February and another in August. The February statement is titled *The Cost of our Living: Economic and Social Justice for the Common Good*. Copies of this statement are available at each church this weekend or you can read the statement online at www.catholic.au/s/article/Social-Justice-Statements

Fill in the missing words from the list below to see what Jesus said to Satan in the desert.

L O R D S E R V E G O D W O R S H I P



THE
YOUR
AND ONLY HIM.

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

Project Compassion 2026 shares four stories from around the world. We'll meet Sisilia from Tanzania, Monoranjon from Bangladesh, Manaini from Fiji and Ahmad from Gaza.

Each of this year's stories highlights unique challenges, yet they are united by the determination to rise above adversity and to build brighter, more hopeful futures for themselves, their families and their communities.



PLEASE DONATE TODAY.

You can support Project Compassion 2026 through the donation boxes, envelopes or by scanning the QR code or online at: www.projectcompassion.org.au/donate or by calling: 1800 024 413

Thank you for standing with us, as we *Unite Against Poverty this Lent.*



Celebrating MST Foundation Day

Today, we join with Fr Thomas to joyfully celebrate the **Foundation Day of the Missionary Society of St. Thomas the Apostle (MST)**, founded on 22 February 1968.

Since 2012, the parishes of Singleton and Branxton have been served with great generosity by MST priests. While we are familiar with the faces of Fr. Thomas Chirackal MST and our former Parish Priest, Fr. George Mullappallil MST, many may not realize the scope of the missionary congregation they represent.

A Mission of Hope and Growth

The MST is a Catholic Society of Apostolic Life dedicated to bringing the Gospel to challenging regions where it is not yet widely known. While the work of the missionaries is demanding, God continues to bless the Society with vocations; last year alone, eight new priests were ordained - a beautiful sign of hope and growth for the mission of the Church.

How You Can Support the Mission of MST

As beneficiaries of their dedicated ministry, we have a responsibility to support these missionaries in return:

- **Prayer:** Please keep Fr. Thomas, the MST priests, and their seminarians in your daily prayers.
- **Sponsorship:** You can directly impact the future of the Church by sponsoring a seminarian.
- **Information:** Please pick up a flyer from the back of the church to learn more about MST's work and how to contribute.

We thank God for the gift of the MST to our Singleton and Branxton Parish communities and pray that their missionary spirit continues to flourish.