

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

Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

23 August 2026

First Reading Isaiah 22:19-23

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

Thus says the Lord of hosts to Shebna, the master of the palace:

I dismiss you from your office,
I remove you from your post,
and the same day I call on my servant
Eliakim son of Hilkiah.

I invest him with your robe,
gird him with your sash,
entrust him with your authority;
and he shall be a father
to the inhabitants of Jerusalem
and to the House of Judah.

I place the key of the House of David
on his shoulder;

should he open, no one shall close,
should he close, no one shall open.

I drive him like a peg
into a firm place;
he will become a throne of glory
for his father's house.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Second Reading Romans 11:33-36

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans.

How rich are the depths of God – how deep his wisdom and knowledge – and how impossible to penetrate his motives or understand his methods! Who could ever know the mind of the Lord? Who could ever be his counsellor? Who could ever give him anything or lend him anything? All that exists comes from him; all is by him and for him. To him be glory for ever! Amen.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation Matthew 16:18

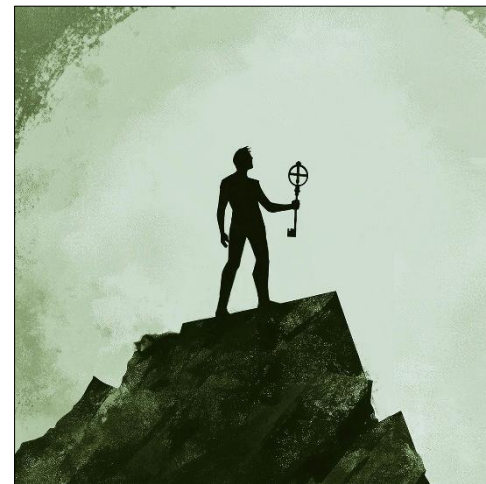
Alleluia, alleluia!
You are Peter, the rock on which I will
build my Church;
the gates of hell will not hold out against
it.
Alleluia!

Gospel Matthew 16:13-20

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi he put this question to his disciples, 'Who do people say the Son of Man is?' And they said, 'Some say he is John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' 'But you,' he said 'who do you say I am?' Then Simon Peter spoke up, 'You are the Christ,' he said, 'the Son of the living God.' Jesus replied, 'Simon son of Jonah, you are a happy man! Because it was not flesh and blood that revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. So I now say to you: You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church. And the gates of the underworld can never hold out against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven: whatever you bind on earth shall be considered bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth shall be considered loosed in heaven.' Then he gave the disciples strict orders not to tell anyone that he was the Christ.

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



REFLECTION
BY FR MICHAEL TATE

What's in a Name?

Jesus had a sense of humour! Simon, son of Jonah, was far from being a rock solid supporter of Jesus. So Jesus gave him the nickname 'Rocky' which in the Greek is Petros.

Jesus puns with the nickname: 'You are Rocky and upon this rock I will build my church.' The natural personality of shifting sands was being transformed by the blessing just given (the only blessing bestowed upon an apostle by Jesus).

Notice that Jesus only makes promises about 'my church', not a church shaped by human imagination, e.g. modes of Roman Imperial rule or with a Eurocentric mindset.

We could pause for a moment to pray that the Risen Lord showers the successor of St Peter with every blessing so that the Church of Jesus the Christ continues to prevail over the forces of death which threaten humanity.

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Responsorial Psalm

Ps 137:1-3. 6. 8. R. v.8

(R.) Lord, your love is eternal;
do not forsake the work of your
hands.

I thank you, Lord, with all my heart,
you have heard the words of my mouth.
Before the angels I will bless you.
I will adore before your holy temple. **(R.)**

I thank you for your faithfulness and love
which excel all we ever knew of you.
On the day I called, you answered;
you increased the strength of my soul. **(R.)**

The Lord is high yet he looks on the lowly
and the haughty he knows from afar.
Your love, O Lord, is eternal,
discard not the work of your hands. **(R.)**

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Rev Prof Michael Tate graduated in Law from the University of Tasmania in 1968, and in Theology from Oxford University in 1971. He lectured at the University of Tasmania from 1972-78, being Dean of the Faculty of Law in 1977-78. He was a Senator for Tasmania from 1978-93, being Federal Minister for Justice from 1987-93. He served as Ambassador to The Hague and the Holy See from 1993-96. He then returned to Australia, was ordained in May 2000, and was a parish priest in the Archdiocese of Hobart until his death in June 2026.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: Turn your ear, O Lord, and answer me; save the servant who trusts in you, my God. Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I cry to you all the day long. COMMUNION ANTIPHON: The earth is replete with the fruits of your work, O Lord; you bring forth bread from the earth and wine to cheer the heart.	We remember in our prayers: Sick: Cecily Agnew, Michael Agnew, Sienna Baker, Eunice Benn, Reney Blyton, Lorraine Cooper, Josè Joaquim De Sousa, Conchita Ekin, Liz and Victor Matt, Jen Phillips, Paul Ruigrok, Vincent Smolenaers, John Tindale, Betty Thompson, Sharon Wood, Elizabeth, Dorothea, Roslyn. Bring healing, comfort, and peace to their bodies. Send strength to their carers. Baptisms: Sovia, Audreyana, Victoria and Inoke Vakauta (Greta). Called by name to be a child of God. Recently Deceased: Christopher McNamara, Murray Forrester. Anniversaries: John Archinal, Dot Spencer, Agnes Thomas. 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. Wedding Anniversary: Alan and Mercia Thomas – 60 years on 27 August 2026.
NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURES 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A 1st Reading: Jeremiah 20:7-9 2nd Reading: Romans 12:1-2 Gospel: Matthew 16:21-27	
MYSTERY OF FAITH When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.	

PARISH CONTACTS			
Parish Administrator	Rev Thomas Chirackal	Presbytery: 6578 9651	Email: thomas.chirackal@mn.catholic.org.au
Assistant Priest	Rev Peter Street	Presbytery: 6578 9651	Email: peter.street@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 30 AUGUST 2026						
	Branxton Saturday 6pm	Greta Sunday 8.15am	Singleton Sunday 7am	Singleton Sunday 10am	Singleton Sunday 5pm	Counters 9.30am Tuesday
Welcomer	E Bendeich	D & J Clarke	C Langford	J Dries	J Dries	Tues 25 August J Woolley
Commentator		D Clarke	G Cattermole	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	H Rapp	
Readers	C Trunk S Purdon	A Humphreys	C Matanisiga B Matanisiga	J Bray	M Cunningham Kevin M	
Prayers		D Clarke	C Spiteri	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	
Offertory	A Trunk S McAlister	Helena Janette	VOLUNTEERS NEEDED	J Cowley C Cowley	Kevin M Jonathon M	
Extraordinary Minister			J Duldulao	VOLUNTEERS NEEDED	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
24 August <i>ST BARTHOLOMEW, APOSTLE</i>	25 August <i>St Louis</i> <i>St Joseph Calsanz</i>	26 August	27 August <i>St Monica</i>	28 August <i>St Augustine</i>	29 August <i>The Passion of</i> <i>St John the Baptist</i>	30 August <i>TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR A</i>
OFFICE CLOSED	OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE OPEN	OFFICE OPEN	SOCIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY	
8.00am Mass St Patrick's Singleton	5.00pm Mass St Patrick's Singleton	9.20am Mass St Patrick's Singleton	5.00pm Mass St Patrick's Singleton	9.20am Anointing Mass St Patrick's Singleton	9.00am Novena 9.20am Mass St Patrick's Singleton	7.00am Mass 10.00m Mass 5.00pm 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.

Anointing Mass - Branxton

Thursday 10 September 2026, 9.20am St Brigid's Branxton

Morning tea will follow in the hall! This will be the last Anointing Mass by Father Thomas, and we would like to make it an 'EARLY' farewell to him and we would like as many as possible to attend the Morning tea! Please join us and if possible please bring a plate.

Thánh lễ Xức Dầu tại Nhà thờ Thánh Brigid

Thứ Năm, ngày 10 tháng 9 lúc 9:20 sáng

Sau thánh lễ sẽ có tiệc trà buổi sáng tại hội trường!

Đây sẽ là Thánh lễ Xức Dầu cuối cùng do Cha Thomas chủ sự. Chúng tôi muốn nhân dịp này gửi lời chia tay sớm đến ngài và rất mong có càng nhiều người tham dự buổi tiệc trà càng tốt.

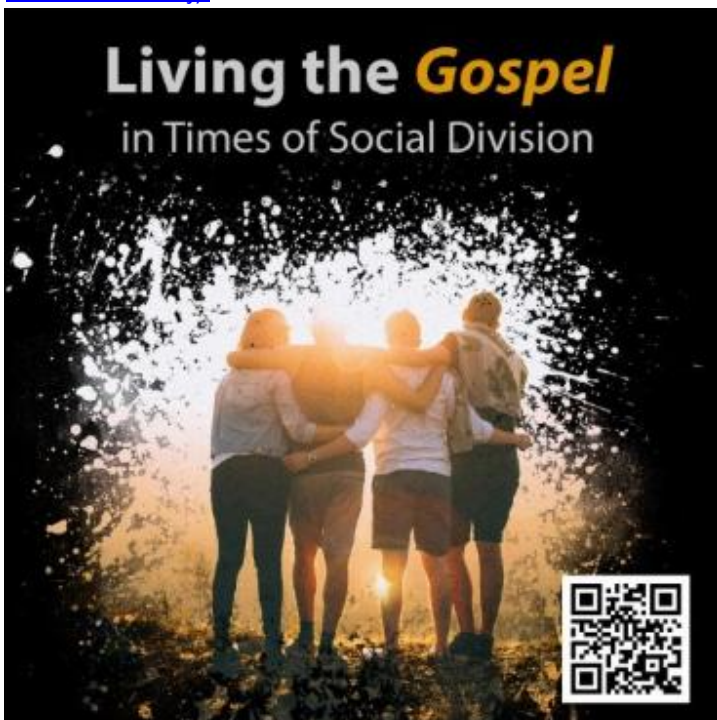
Xin mời quý vị cùng tham dự. Nếu có thể, vui lòng mang theo một món ăn để chia sẻ.

Xin Chúa chúc lành cho quý vị.

Mercia

Living the Gospel in Time of Social Division

Bishop Michael Kennedy reflects on the latest Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Social Justice Statement and the Gospel call to be people of encounter and reconciliation. Scan the QR code or visit <https://mn.catholic.org.au/news/living-the-gospel-in-times-of-social-division-a-message-from-bishop-michael-kennedy/>



Saturday Novena Intentions – St Patrick's Singleton

All parishioners are invited to make use of the Novena prayer box located at the front of St Patrick's church. If you have a burden on your heart, a grace you are praying for, or a blessing you wish to give thanks for, please write a note and place it inside. All submitted letters of petition and thanksgiving will be remembered during our weekly Saturday morning Novena before at 9.20am Mass. We are also inviting volunteers to join the Novena leader's roster. Guiding the parish in this reflection is a beautiful ministry of prayer and leadership. If you would like to be part of the roster, please get in touch with Frieda King.

Calling for EOI's – Diocesan Councils and Advisory Boards

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle warmly invites you to once again journey with us in faith, open dialogue and discernment as we continue to establish and strengthen our new Councils and Advisory Boards. Following our initial Expressions of Interest process last year, we are now seeking to fill some vacancies on our Councils and Advisory Boards as we build on the strong foundation. This next phase is an opportunity to broaden participation and ensure our governance reflects the diversity and rich gifts of our diocesan community.

We invite people from across the Diocese who feel called to serve to submit an expression of interest via the Diocesan website <https://mn.catholic.org.au/governance-advisory-group-eoi/>. Opportunities exist for those with backgrounds in Governance, Finance and Banking. We are also seeking new members for our Community and Wellbeing, CCF and Education boards.

St Carlo Acutis Major Relic Mission

Wednesday 9 September 2026, Aberdeen

The St Carlo Acutis Exhibition at St Joseph's Catholic College, Segenhoe St, Aberdeen, will be open to the wider community and parishioners from 2:00-6:00pm.

St Thomas Church, Aberdeen Schedule:

10:00am–2:30pm: Church open for school students and parishioners

3:00–4:00pm: Adoration and Confession with Fr Sabu

4:00–5:00pm: Mass, followed by a talk and veneration with Fr Sabu

5:00–6:00pm: Exhibition open to the community, Moylan Hall. There will also be a tea, coffee and cake stall in the foyer of the hall. A gold coin donation is appreciated.

Learn more at <https://mn.catholic.org.au/st-carlo-acutis-relic-mission/>



World Youth Day 2027



Bishop Michael Kennedy has announced the Diocesan pilgrimage to South Korea and Japan for young people aged 16-35 next year. World Youth Day with Pope Leo XIV will be an enriching experience of pilgrimage for young people which has a profound impact on their relationship with Jesus, their prayer life, their lived mission and their relationships with others. Join us for the Reception of the Relic of WYD Patron Saint Carlo Acutis on September 8 and a WYD Launch Event featuring early information about this exciting opportunity.

Learn More at <https://WYD27Launch.eventbrite.com.au>

Last Chance Tickets: Called to Know More – Formation Series

Wednesday 26 August, 12pm, Diocesan Resource Centre

Join us for *Morality 101: The Joy of Christian Living in a Morally Crazy World* with Fr Anthony Coloma, exploring moral choices through "encounter" with Jesus via Scripture, Eucharist, and prayer. Discover how hardship shapes faith, and God's welcoming love for those who have drifted. Come listen, share, and enjoy hospitality afterward! All welcome. Learn more at <https://mn.catholic.org.au/event>

MAGNIFICA HUMANITAS: CHAPTER TWO

Encyclical Letter of Pope Leo XIV

Chapter 2 of Pope Leo XIV's encyclical Magnifica Humanitas outlines the core foundations and permanent principles of the Church's Social Doctrine. It establishes the moral standards needed to evaluate modern challenges like artificial intelligence, arguing that human worth comes from God rather than economic utility.

Core Theological Foundations

Intrinsic Human Dignity: Every person holds deep ontological, moral, social, and existential value because they are made in God's image, not because they are productive or useful. Therefore, regardless of the choices one makes in life, or the sins we commit, we still have this dignity. Nothing can take it away.

Rejection of Utilitarianism: Systems that measure human worth by economic output or technological efficiency directly oppose human dignity. People are worth more than things and worth so much more than any money they might create.

Key Social Principles

Universal Destination of Goods: Earth's resources and major technological breakthroughs belong to the entire human family and must never be hoarded by a powerful few. This hoarding leads to people being treated as commodities that can be disposed of.

Subsidiarity: Society should avoid top-down, welfare-state control, instead empowering smaller local groups and shared responsibility. Enabling people to reach their full potential.

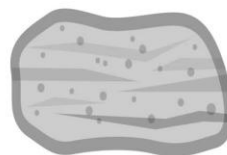
Solidarity: Acting as a moral virtue and a social principle, solidarity fights indifference and looks out for vulnerable people and future generations.

Social Justice: Injustices stem not only from individual bad choices, but also from flawed economic and cultural systems that automatically build inequality.

Integral Human Development: Society must support the growth of the whole person across all physical, spiritual, and social dimensions. As well as ensuring that the whole person is enabled to thrive, so as to reach the potential that has been given us by God. The Church is ready to help in this, but all in society must play their part.



Match up each of these symbols of St Peter with its correct story



Jesus asked his disciples, "Who do you say I am?" Peter replied, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Jesus told Peter that he would be the foundation upon which the church would be built.

When Jesus first met Peter and his brother Andrew he said to them, "Follow me!" Immediately they stopped what they were doing and followed Jesus.

Jesus told his disciples that they would desert him. Peter told Jesus he would never desert him, but Jesus predicted that Peter would deny him three times.

Jesus said to Peter, "You are Peter; to you I will give the keys to the kingdom of heaven."