



City Pastoral REGION

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE

Inner Newcastle Parish: Sacred Heart Cathedral, Newcastle West; St Joseph's Church, The Junction; St Mary, Star of the Sea Church, Newcastle; Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, Tighes Hill; St Laurence O'Toole Church, Broadmeadow. **Mayfield Parish:** Christ the King, Mayfield West. **Stockton Parish:** St Peter-in-Chains, Stockton.

SUNDAY 27 MARCH 2022

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT, YEAR C

LAETARE SUNDAY

Our Clergy

Fr Andrew Doohan
Fr Peter Thoai
Fr Matthew Muller
Fr John Vo

Regional Office—St Benedict's Centre

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Our Staff

Margaret Cox (*Reception & Administration*)
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Anne Warren (*Business Manager Finance*)
Jade Simonsen (*Business Manager Property*)
Dr Anne Millard (*Music, Liturgy, Sacraments, Bulletin*)

Other Contacts

Lingard Hospital Team: Contact the Parish Office

Mercy Pastoral Team: Sr Patricia Whitten rsm
(02) 4979 1116

St Joseph's Pastoral Team: Contact the Parish Office



Parish Bulletin: Prayer requests and items for the Bulletin should be received at the Parish Office by 5pm on Wednesdays.

Our Parishes incorporate suburbs located on the traditional country of the Awabakal and Worimi peoples. We acknowledge their cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing relationship with the land, pay respect to their Elders past and present, and commit ourselves to work together for reconciliation and justice.

THE PARISH DIARY...(for the week ahead)

Fourth Week of Lent, Year C

Monday—28th March

8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral

Tuesday—29th March

8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral

Wednesday—30th March

8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral

9:00am Mass @ Mayfield West

9:15am Mass @ Tighes Hill

Followed by Stations of the Cross

Thursday—31st March

8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral

8:30am Mass @ Stockton

Friday—1st April

10:15am Mass @ The Junction

11:00am Exposition, Adoration & Reconciliation @
The Cathedral (until 12pm)

12:05pm Mass @ The Cathedral

Saturday—2nd April

9:15am Mass @ The Cathedral, followed by the
Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help
(followed by Reconciliation)

5:30pm Mass @ The Cathedral **

5:30pm Mass @ The Junction

6:00pm Mass @ Mayfield West

Sunday—3rd April ****DAYLIGHT SAVING ENDS!!!**

5th Sunday of Lent, Year C

7.30am Mass @ St Mary's

8:00am Mass @ Tighes Hill

9:00am Mass @ The Junction

9:00am Mass @ Stockton

9:30am Mass @ The Cathedral * **

11:00am Mass @ The Junction (*Italian*)

11:30am Mass @ The Cathedral (*Polish*)

5:00pm Mass @ The Cathedral **

6:00pm Mass @ Mayfield West (*Vietnamese*)

* *Livestreamed on the Cathedral's YouTube channel—
www.youtube.com/c/SacredHeartCathedralHamilton*

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:

First Reading

Is 43:16-21

Second Reading

Phil 3:8-14

Gospel

Jn 8:1-11

**Next week in the Cathedral we will use readings
from Year A due to the Scrutiny

STATIONS OF THE CROSS @ TIGHES HILL DURING LENT

Immediately following 9:15am Mass on Wednesday.

BOOK CLUB

Sunday, 3rd April @ 6pm to discuss

Treasure and Dirt by Chris Hammer. If you
would like to participate in book club

meetings, please email
newcparish@mn.catholic.org.au

I ❤️
Book Club

LAETARE SUNDAY

This Sunday is the 4th Sunday of Lent, known as Laetare Sunday. The term "rose" is used to describe this lighter shade of the colour violet in the Roman Rite. Laetare Sunday is considered a day of relaxation from normal Lenten rigours; a day of hope with Easter at last within sight. To celebrate, please wear rose (aka pink) to Mass. If you attend Mass at the Cathedral on Saturday evening, please stay for "Super Saturday, Sips and Chips." Along with an opportunity to chat, it will provide a chance to farewell Fr Andrew.

PASTORAL CARE TEAM

Meets Thursday 31st March at 2.30pm in the Parish Centre, The Junction.

PRAYING THE GOSPELS

You are invited to connect and pray with each other across the Diocese from your own home.

God speaks to us through the words of the Gospel and then through artist's images of the Gospel message.

Join us each Wednesday 5.00-5.45pm.

Zoom link:

<https://mncatholic.zoom.us/j/61036103033>

Password: pray

For more information contact:

rose.mcallister@mn.catholic.org.au

PRAYER REQUESTS

RECENTLY DECEASED: Rick Thornton, Gary Dougherty, Janice Bennett, John Sall

ANNIVERSARIES: Patricia (Pat) Fitzgerald, Charlie Hart, Sidney Russell, Ronald Sattler, Margaret Tierney

SICK: Maree Halbert, Carlo Rossi, Kath Murray, Veronica McCann, Wayne Bishop, Peter Skinner, Carmel Blair, Peter Keddie, Tiani Bishop, Jason Yu, Joel Samy, Tom Parker, Max Williamson, Sam and Margaret Broad

Names may be placed here by contacting the Parish Office. Please refer to the Policy Document on the Parish website—visit www.newcastlecatholic.org.au/downloads.



DEPARTURE OF FR ANDREW DOOHAN

As I am sure you are all aware by now, Fr Andrew Doohan is leaving the City Pastoral Region after Easter Sunday and going on a well-deserved sabbatical. I have received a number of calls expressing the desire to leave a token of appreciation for Fr Andrews years of service to the Parishes of Stockton, Mayfield and Inner Newcastle. Those of you who cannot attend a Mass where Fr Andrew is presiding, please feel free to send any correspondence, gifts etc to the office and we will ensure he receives them. Fr Andrew Doohan C/- Po Box 6, The Junction, 2291. *Jade Simonsen*

COLLECTION AT THE CATHEDRAL

There will be a collection taken up after all Cathedral Masses on the weekend of Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd April to provide the opportunity for us to offer a practical thank you to Father Andrew.

APPOINTMENT OF FR JOHN LOVELL



Fr John Lovell, currently stationed in the Chisholm Region, will assume the role of Moderator of the City Pastoral Region and Rector of the Cathedral (in the temporary format of administrator) with effect from the Second Sunday of Easter.

VIEW, CHEW, AND CHAT

The schedule for March and April is:

March 30: No meeting

April 6: Bible Study

April 13: Lectio

April 20: Lectio

All meetings are online via Zoom. All welcome to participate regularly or occasionally.

E-PETITION

An online petition to abolish Alex Greenwich's Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2021 (VAD) in the NSW Parliament is available at:

[LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL - Signing ePetition - Please unanimously reject the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2021 \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.legislativecouncil.nsw.gov.au/legislation/initiatives/signing-petition)

An excellent article regarding the legislation that appeared in the Catholic Weekly may be viewed at <https://www.catholicweekly.com.au/nsw-dying-bill-danger/>

The 'ePetition' is open until 25 April 2022.

ST VINCENT DE PAUL FLOOD APPEAL

St Vincent De Paul have launched their 2022 Flood Appeal to assist people affected by the catastrophic flooding in the Northern Rivers and Lismore areas.

Money raised will be distributed by the SVDP Coordinator in coordination with the local community.

Donations can be made:

Online at <https://donate.vinnies.org.au/appeals-nsw/vinnies-nsw-flood-appeal> (use the QR code at St Joseph's The Junction or Sacred Heart)

St Vincent De Paul envelopes marked with Flood Appeal

MEDITATION GROUPS AT LIVING WATERS CENTRE

34 Kenrick Street, The Junction, on Wednesday at 7.30am and Friday at 11.00am. All are welcome, including new meditators, but you will need to be at least double-vaccinated and you must wear a mask. Hand sanitizing is still required. Wednesday is usually a small group and would suit those who do not wish to go into crowds.

The Monday evening group is not resuming, but a meditation group is available on Tuesdays at 6.00pm at St Philip's Church, Vista Parade, Kotara.

CONTINUING OUR JOURNEY...

BUILDING THE KINGDOM OF GOD TOGETHER IN 2022: LENTEN REFLECTION

During Lent we are invited into prayer to renew and refocus our relationship with God, with ourselves and others, so we can fully celebrate the Paschal Mystery and live life to the full.

Continuing our synodal journey, you are invited to come together in parishes, schools and across the Diocese, both face-to-face and online, to remain connected during the season of Lent.

The resource provides the opportunity to encounter scripture and our synodal themes through the process of Mystagogical Reflection. As you encounter the mystery of God in the scripture, this will lead you to discover the mystery of God in one another through sharing of life and experience. This resource is available on the Diocesan website: www.mn.catholic.org.au/church-mission/catholic-life/liturgy/lent-2022

The Diocese will be hosting Mystagogical Reflections each week during Lent, Monday mornings at 10.30am and Thursday evenings at 6.30pm. To register, visit: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/o/diocese-of-maitland-newcastle-18080128129>

PARISH FEEDBACK ON FR ANDREW'S PASTORAL LETTER

Fr Andrew's Pastoral Letter is printed in this weekend's Bulletin to ensure that all parishioners have the opportunity to read it. The Regional Pastoral Council has received some feedback from the parishes and some individual online feedback. We are now seeking more information in preparation for further discussions & input from Parishioners, culminating in a Regional Assembly on a date to be fixed in consultation with our new moderator Fr John Lovell. On the weekends of 2-3 April and 9-10 April, a Questionnaire will be made available at all Masses. The Regional Pastoral Council would appreciate you completing the Questionnaire and leaving it in the box at the front of the church.

A PASTORAL LETTER TO THE CITY PASTORAL REGION CHALLENGED AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Dear Sisters and Brothers,
The last two years have been a challenge for many people in the broader community and the faithful community of the three parishes that constitute the City Pastoral Region. The arrival and persevering presence of COVID-19 has impacted how our communities interact. Our inability to gather each Sunday to worship God and celebrate Eucharist has challenged the bonds that usually draw us together. The imposition of 'lockdowns' and other restrictions, the requirement to 'check in' wherever we go and avail ourselves of vaccines, and other assorted developments have been a genuine shock to our understanding of who we are as a Church and as a community.

That said, however, I have been filled with hope at how many people have weathered these challenges and maintained contact with each other in the face of circumstances that made that usual task more difficult than it should be. The ingenuity and commitment of so many people to maintaining our bonds has been truly inspirational.

In the spirit of that ingenuity and commitment, I write this Pastoral Letter in which I hope to put before you some of the challenges facing the parishes of the City Pastoral Region. I do so in the hope that together, we might find solutions that everyone can embrace and move forward to continue our mission of proclaiming the Reign of God in the inner suburbs of the City of Newcastle.

Financial Challenges

COVID-19 has seen a dramatic decrease in the three parishes' ordinary income for the financial year ended 30 June 2021. We are certainly not alone in experiencing such an impact by any means, but we also need to remember that generally speaking, our parishes 'run on the smell of an oily rag'. The decline in income presents a challenge for us and other parishes in similar situations.

While there are some cash reserves that the parishes can draw on, this is not sustainable in the long term and, realistically, is only delaying the inevitable need to address both our income and our expenditure. I have already directed those responsible for reviewing our budget for the current and future financial years to look at ways by which our income can be increased and our expenditure reduced. However, such a task is not always easy, and there will be some angst associated with the necessary changes to allow us to live within our means.

One part of this expenditure review is a moratorium on spending outside what is already budgeted. Requests for such expenditure will be assessed on a case by case basis with the assistance of the Finance Committee, and only those cases considered as vital will be approved.

As an additional result of the moratorium, some projects previously planned but not yet commenced have been paused. They will be revisited once the outcome of the consultations and decision envisioned by this Pastoral Letter have concluded (see further details below).

Our Physical Assets

The City Pastoral Region is blessed with many significant physical assets in our church buildings, presbyteries, and other buildings. Given the age of some of these assets – particularly our church buildings – many of them require significant capital expenditure to ensure their longevity. In light of the above information, the need for capital expenditure presents a challenge for the parishes of the Region.

In addition, it needs to be recognised that the schools within our Pastoral Region occupy land that is canonically owned by the parishes of the Region. These assets are not immediately available to the parishes to financially support the mission work of the parishes. There are legal reasons why this is so. There are continuing conversations at a diocesan and state level about acknowledging the canonical ownership of these particular assets rightly. However, we should assume that no immediate benefit can be gained from these specific real estate assets owned by the parishes.

I have asked the Regional Business Manager to look at all the non-church buildings to identify possible ways of generating additional income streams for our parishes. These possibilities will allow the parishes of the Region to strengthen their financial situation without relying solely on the generosity of our parishioners.

The question of the church buildings raises several unique challenges:

- **St Columban's Church, Mayfield**, remains unsafe for use and has been 'deconsecrated'. In reality, the only option available to the parish is for the building to be demolished and the land reused to provide opportunities for both the parish and the neighbouring schools. Newcastle City Council is refusing to approve the necessary demolition at present, and the associated risk remains with the parish.
- **Christ the King Church, Mayfield West**, is landlocked by the aged care facility that surrounds it. The facility's operators have approached the parish about acquiring our property to permit the expansion of their facility. The proceeds of such a sale could be put toward constructing a new joint facility on the site of the decommissioned St Columban's Church, Mayfield.
- **St Laurence O'Toole's Church, Broadmeadow**, is currently closed because of a need to undertake some significant internal work, including electrical rewiring, stabilising the choir loft, and replacing windows. The estimated cost of these repairs is high and would ultimately be unaffordable if asbestos is found on the site, a danger that has already been identified.
- **Sacred Heart Cathedral, Hamilton** is one of the church buildings not currently needing much by way of capital expenditure. There is a proposed internal lighting upgrade planned, but the parish has received a specific legacy that has already been earmarked for that purpose. The bequest stipulates that it be used on the fabric of the Cathedral building itself and not for other purposes. The parish is canonically obliged to honour the donor's intention now that the legacy has been accepted.
- **Mary Immaculate Church, Tighes Hill**, is currently being prepared to repair guttering and windows as the first part of required maintenance. The proposed repairs have been deemed urgent and necessary and planned before the capital expenditure moratorium.
- **St Joseph's Church, Merewether**, faces some

potential structural issues that may require urgent attention but is otherwise in reasonably good shape. The necessity of work is currently being assessed, along with developing a potential scope of work. A decision about the priority of this work will be made once all the information is available.

- **St Mary, Star of the Sea Church, Newcastle** remains a significant challenge to the parish because of the heritage listing of the building. The proposed ramp project has been mothballed, and remedial work that is deemed necessary and urgent by the Finance Committee will be undertaken as required.
- **St Peter-in-Chains Church, Stockton**, has recently completed significant maintenance work to ensure its stability and continued usage. There may be other maintenance needed in the future, but the urgency of repairs and maintenance is not a high priority at this particular point.

The financial challenges currently facing the parishes of the City Pastoral Region make the maintenance of seven operational churches a difficult one. The question of just how many churches need to be open for regular use in the Region, and more specifically in the Inner Newcastle Parish, possibly should have been addressed well before now. However, the current challenges facing the parishes of the Region make it a more pressingly urgent issue. The continuing ability for the Inner Newcastle Parish to operate five churches needs to be questioned, and some difficult choices are 'just around the corner'.

I realise that seeing this in print will come as a shock to many. I wish it were different, but this is the reality we face as a Region and as the parishes of that Region.

Availability of Mass, Clergy and other Ministers

With the departure of Fr Peter Street in mid-2021, we are now permanently reduced to a total of three members of the clergy appointed to the parishes of the City Pastoral Region. There is no likelihood that this situation will change at any time in the immediately foreseeable future, and, if we are realistic, the only possibility we do face is a further reduction of clergy numbers as more of the diocesan clergy retire.

We are very fortunate to have the generous support of a number of our retired clergy assisting us at present to maintain a schedule of Masses that was predicated on the availability of many more clergy members than we currently have. While appreciated, this is not a situation that can continue indefinitely.

We need to face the real challenge of questioning how many Masses we have in the Region on a Sunday and where we have them.

As a basic rule of thumb, the Sunday Mass schedule needs to be manageable with the number of active clergy appointed to the parishes. We cannot continue with a program with our retired clergy assisting us each week.

In addition, we need to ensure that the appropriate number of ministers – sacristans, readers, servers, musicians, communion ministers, etc. – are available to assist the Parishes in celebrating Mass (and other liturgies) with the kind of dignity and solemnity that it requires. While it may be logistically possible to celebrate Mass in a church building at a particular time, the inability to field a full range of ministers might make it practically impossible.

The ability to gather for the celebration of Mass (and other liturgies) cannot simply be left to, or based on, the availability of a member of the clergy of the Region; it must be an effort of all the community in ensuring that we can celebrate worthily.

Accordingly, the challenge of Sunday Masses needs to be addressed now in a cooperative way rather than waiting until we have no other option, ensuring that we have a schedule of Masses across the Region that provides a good range of times and locations. This rescheduling will mainly be a challenge for the Inner Newcastle Parish because of the number of churches we have **and** because one of those churches is the Cathedral Church of the Diocese.

Unfortunately, we will need to consider reducing the number of Masses available in the City Pastoral Region and reconsider where Masses are celebrated and at what times.

A weekday liturgical schedule is similarly in need of review. Still, the options are broader in that it is not always necessary for Mass to be celebrated on a weekday in every church. Other options can be explored, drawing on the rich liturgical and spiritual heritage of the Church to provide a range of possibilities across the week and across all the churches that are operational in the Region. The one place in the Region that is obliged to offer a daily Mass is the Cathedral, and only because it is the Cathedral.

As a Region, we need to embrace the possibilities available because of how many clergy members we have, the number of operational churches, and the range of liturgical and spiritual experiences we are prepared to explore.

Where To From Here

There are no easy answers or solutions immediately available to any of the above challenges. And I certainly do not have any answers. The solutions, and a way forward, will need to be found through conversation, consultation and discernment. If solutions are identified, we also need to be open to ‘the bigger picture’ and willing to embrace change and sacrifice what we have always done.

The purpose of this Pastoral Letter is to outline some of the more pressing challenges facing the parishes of the City Pastoral Region. It is the first step in a more extensive process of determining how we might best continue to embrace the mission that has been entrusted to us. The hope is that this Pastoral Letter will prompt the necessary conversations among parishioners that will ensure that all of the above issues – and others – are canvassed and talked about openly.

The second step of the process will be a more formal conversation and consultation sessions to be planned for towards the beginning of February 2022, where issues can be spoken of in larger groups and potential solutions identified and canvassed.

The third and final step will be a Regional Assembly towards the middle of the year. At that Assembly, the way forward can be prayerfully discerned and settled on, ready to be implemented by everyone as together we seek to move forward.

The Regional Pastoral Council will be the primary driving force of this process of discernment and decision making. Any solution to the challenges facing the City Pastoral Region must come from this process. I ask everyone to embrace the process willingly and wholeheartedly to meet the challenges facing us and find a way forward.

Above all, I invite you all to pray about the challenges facing us. If we approach the challenges facing us firmly anchored in prayer, I am confident that we will find a way of continuing to be Church, proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ in the inner suburbs of the City of Newcastle.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Fr Andrew Doohan

Moderator, City Pastoral Region

8 December 2021, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

JUNIOR WORDSEARCH

I was lost but now I am found

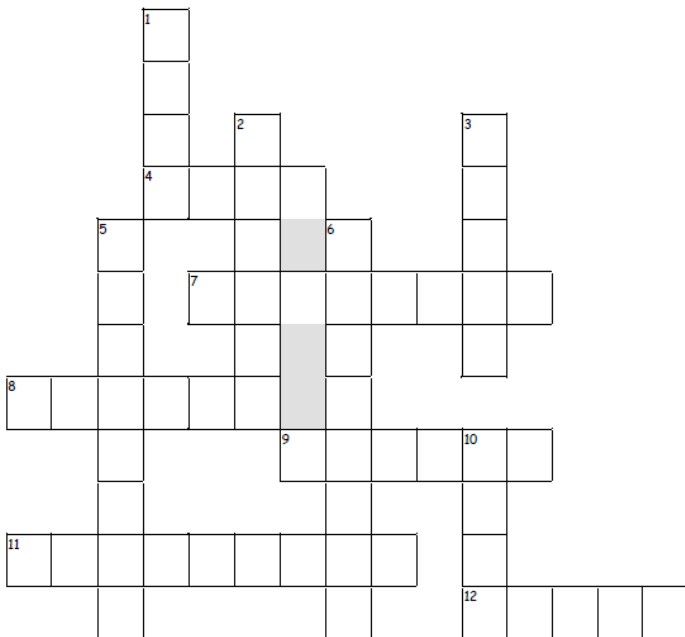
A R J X S J U N L W I O D B
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 S V O B E Y E D K N U X C L
 J R Z J Y C K V L G G A Y H
 R O U J M B W A S T E D D C
 T K H Y S G T Q O S L A V E

Try to find these words:

- begged
- celebrate
- eats
- found
- friendly
- glad
- obeyed
- property
- ring
- slave
- starving
- wasted

CROSSWORD

I was lost but now I am found



Across

- 4: happy
- 7: very hungry
- 8: to have done what you were told to do
- 9: asked for charity with humility
- 11: to have a party for a special occasion
- 12: a person who has to work for no wages

Down

- 1: jewellery worn on the finger
- 2: squandered, used poorly
- 3: discovered
- 5: likeable, easy to get along with
- 6: land that belongs to someone
- 10: consumes food

TODAY'S LITURGY

Entrance Antiphon: Cf. Is 66:10-11

Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her.
Be joyful, all who were in mourning;
exult and be satisfied at her consoling breast.

First Reading: Jos 5:9-12

*The people of God went to the promised land
and there kept the passover.*

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 33:2-7. R. v.9

(R.) Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

1. I will bless the Lord at all times,
his praise always on my lips;
in the Lord my soul shall make its boast.
The humble shall hear and be glad. (R.)
2. Glorify the Lord with me.
Together let us praise his name.
I sought the Lord and he answered me;
from all my terrors he set me free. (R.)
3. Look towards him and be radiant;
let your faces not be abashed.
This poor man called; the Lord heard him
and rescued him from all his distress. (R.)

Second Reading: 2 Cor 5:17-21

God reconciled us to himself through Christ.

Gospel Acclamation: Lk 15:18

Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus Christ!
I will rise and go to my Father and tell him:
Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.
Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Gospel: Lk 15:1-3. 11-32

*Your brother here was dead and has come to
life.*

Communion Antiphon: Lk 15: 32

You must rejoice, my son,
for your brother was dead and has come to life;
he was lost and is found.

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A THOUGHT

Because the only context in which most people ever hear the word *prodigal* is in relation to this parable, there is a common misunderstanding of the word. Because the parable is also referred to as the parable of the lost son, many people think prodigal means lost. However, to be prodigal means to be wastefully extravagant. When the son took his father's money he adopted a prodigal lifestyle. However, the irony of the story that is often lost is that the father too was prodigal in the extravagant welcome he gave. The father's extravagance echoes God's extravagant and abundant grace and love.

ART EXHIBITION:

SOCIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT

CRY OF THE EARTH, CRY OF THE POOR

In the 2021-2022 Social Justice Statement Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor, Pope Francis reminds us that encounter, dialogue, and listening with an open heart enable God's transforming love to move more powerfully in the world.

Artists are invited to create a work based on the themes found in the Social Justice Statement. Works can be 2 or 3 dimensional no larger than 1 x 1 metres. Name, title of work, school, parish and phone number clearly labelled on the back. This information, plus a 150 word (maximum) artist statement, must accompany the work and be emailed before 29 April through to rose.mcallister@mn.catholic.org.au

Delivered to Catholic Schools Office reception, 841 Hunter St, Newcastle West 2302

Exhibition date: Saturday May 14

Location: TBA || Time: 2pm– 5pm

Categories Stage 3, Stage 4, Stage 5, Stage 6, Adult.
\$150 prize for the winning entry in each Category

THE CHUCKLE

It is the third Friday of Lent, and the faithful parishioner stumbles through pouring rain past hamburger huts and steak houses into the monastery at Mount Angel and requests shelter. He's just in time for dinner and was treated to the best fish and chips he's ever had.

After dinner, he goes into the kitchen to thank the chefs. He's met by two brothers, Brother Michael, and Brother Francis."

"I'm very pleased to meet you. I just wanted to thank you for a wonderful dinner. The fish and chips were the best I've ever tasted. Out of curiosity, who cooked what?"

Brother Michael replies, "Well, I'm the fish friar." The man turns to the other brother and says, "Then you must be . . ."

"Yes, I'm afraid I'm the chip monk."