



**City Pastoral** REGION  
CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE

*The Parish Vine*

**St Benedict's 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.

**Mayfield Parish:** Christ the King, Mayfield West.

**Stockton Parish:** St Peter-in-Chains, Stockton.

**Sunday 22 March 2026**

**5th Sunday of Lent**



Dear Parish Family,

You might have missed that Friday 20 March was International Happiness Day. Hope you had a 'Happy Day'! A day promulgated in 2012 by the United Nations to recognise that happiness and wellbeing are universal goals for all of us. The UN sets goals for nations and their industries and often reminds all of us to find ways to be more sustainable with our resources and that our economic growth and sustainability shouldn't be at the expense of the vulnerable, the poor, and the marginalised. Happiness day is a way of challenging societies and their individuals to be more inclusive and equitable in our national decision making.

According to a google search we celebrate this day by being 'mindful of others, performing random acts of kindness' and connecting through both with the broader community and those we meet along the way. It is also what God wants for us too in the writing of Ecclesiastes, 'I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live. That each of them may eat and drink and find satisfaction in all their toil—this is the gift of God'. Our 'toil' is the way we share the love of God with others exactly as the UN reminds but also in the blueprint Jesus gives daily in the witness of the Gospels, the lives of the holy men and women who have gone before, the faith filled people around us.

For Lent our 'blueprint' comes under three headings: almsgiving, prayer and fasting, given to us at the very beginning when we celebrated Ash Wednesday. All through Lent we have been reminded through the events of Year A what that looks like for us in our encounters with Jesus and those placed along our path. Remember the woman at the well, the blind man, the Transfiguration and this weekend with Lazarus and his death. All bigger than simply the people intimately involved at that moment. Look and see all those people who will witness Lazarus coming forward, those people the Samaritan woman talks with, the intimacy of the relationship with Jesus witnessing and hearing God's voice, the challenge of the crowd gathering and 'seeing' the blind man's sight restored.

You might be aware that we have three first class relics in our Cathedral Altars. A first-class relic is a piece of bone, hair, flesh or blood of the saint. I'm not entirely sure where each one has been placed however we have relics from Saints Eusebius, Boniface and Francis of Assisi. The paperwork is a little loose on the when, the where, who and the how of the relics. The note our archivist found doesn't identify which St Eusebius we have. I am still trying to work that out. The saints listed with the name all seem to have been martyred or died during the 3rd and 4th centuries. I have yet to baptise a baby Eusebius. St Boniface is referenced but not identified clearly either and there are several including Popes. If we pray to one or the other it will get sorted at a 'higher level' I'm sure. Our third relic is St Francis of Assisi. One of my favourite places is his Hermitage where he is reported to have preached to the birds, for they were the only ones listening! Whomever we have, the saints give us wonderful example of living the joy of the gospels and what really makes us happy.

Kind regards, Greg

**Parish Priest**

Fr Greg Barker

**Assisting Clergy**

Fr Niel Olano  
Fr Anthony Coloma  
Fr Ramille Bigcas  
Deacon Kevin Gadd

**Parish Administration**

McAuley Building, 242 Parry St,  
Newcastle West, 2302  
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Email:

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Website:

[www.newcastlecatholic.org.au](http://www.newcastlecatholic.org.au)

**Note:** Our *NEW* website is looking great. Check it out. Feedback welcome!

Anne Warren (*Business Manager*)  
Jenny Pascua (*Parish Secretary*)  
Peter Davies (*Administration*)  
Mary-Anne de Luca (*Sacraments*)  
Dr Anne Millard (*Music & Liturgy*)

*We acknowledge the Awabakal and Worimi peoples - the traditional custodians of these lands.*

## The Parish Diary...(for the week ahead)

5th week of Lent, Year A/2

Mon 23 Mar

8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral

Tues 24 Mar

8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral

9:00am Mass @ Stockton

10:30am Mass at Badcoe, Newcastle

Wed 25 Mar *The Annunciation*

8.15am Mass @ The Cathedral

9:00am Mass @ Mayfield West

9:30am Mass @ Holy Family School

Thurs 26 Mar

8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral

9:00am Mass @ Stockton

5:30pm Mass @ Seafarer's Mission, Wickam

Fri 27 Mar

10:15am Mass @ The Junction

11:00am Exposition, Adoration and Reconciliation @ The Cathedral

12:05pm Mass @ The Cathedral

5:00pm Polish Stations of the Cross @ The Cathedral

6:00pm Young Adults' Stations of the Cross @ The Cathedral

Sat 28 Mar

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

*Palm Sunday*

Sat 28 Mar

5:30pm Vigil Mass @ The Cathedral

5:30pm Vigil Mass @ The Junction

5:30pm Vigil Mass @ Mayfield West

Sun 29 Mar *Palm Sunday*

7:30am Mass @ St Mary's

8:00am Mass @ Tighes Hill

9:00am Mass @ Stockton

9:30am Mass @ The Cathedral\*

11:00am Italian Mass @ The Junction

12noon Polish Mass @ The Cathedral

5:00pm Mass @ The Cathedral

\* Livestreamed on the Cathedral's YouTube channel - search Sacred Heart Cathedral Hamilton

## Prayer Requests

**RECENTLY DECEASED:** Elizabeth Mary Scott



**ANNIVERSARIES:** Barry Gordon, Dionisio Di Santo, Maria Rosa Goncalves, Sidney Russell, John Rumball, Ollie Sutton, Michael Bulley, Marie Sullivan, Tony Tamplin, Norma Woodland, Harry Walker, Bernard Rabbitt, Thomas Crittenden, Doris Zimmerman

**PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:** John Hayes, Gary Valaire, Jeremy Eden, Braxton Rayner, Patricia Gillett, Tui Innes, Raymond Morley, Louise Hall, Phil Riordan, Twon Nguyen, Eileen Jennings, Gwen Haggerty, Nick Fazzini, Rose Gathercole, Alexander Klein, Patty Keegan, Leonetta Papichio, John Woods, Hoagy VanEwyk, Pat Fitzpatrick, Martyn Docherty

*Please send prayer requests and items for the Bulletin to the Parish Office by 5pm on Wednesdays.*

## Our Columbaria

Those in our Columbaria with March anniversaries:

### At Sacred Heart Cathedral:

Louise Anne Balzer

Grahame Blick

Francesco Bufi

Veronica Ellen (Verona)

Cable

Edward Caelli

Warren Cunningham

Michael Edward Delaney

Veroncia Ellicott

Betsy Gadd-Ardesch

Frank Gibson

Olwyn Livingstone

Keith Martin

Nigel Mulligan

Terence O'Beirne

John O'Brien

Peter Francis O'Sullivan

Wesbrook (Wes) Smythe

Coz Sphiris

Anna Maria Stefanson

William (Bill) Van Schyndel

Thomas (Jack) Wakely

### At St Joseph's:

Gloria Doyle

Carmel Blair

Muriel Boekenstein

Della Brain

Ellis Brown

Thelma Doohan

Megan Evans

Margaret Fleming

Barry Lewis John Gordon

Joyce Johns

Jack Muldoon

Yvonne Pryde

John Sowerby

Paul Wallace

Win Young

Kenneth McDonnell

Eleanora C Bertoss

Kathleen Booker

James Struck

Barbara Georgas

Tony Tamplin

*Eternal rest grant unto them and may perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace, Amen.*

## The Chuckle

How does Moses make his coffee?

*Hebrews it!*



## Pastoral Care Meeting

The Pastoral Care Committee will be having their regular meeting –

When: March 26th, Thursday

Time: 2:30pm

Where: at the old office at St. Joseph's, The Junction



## Earth Hour

Participate in the EARTH HOUR on Saturday 28 March, 8.30pm.

Join the global movement by

**SWITCHING OFF ALL YOUR LIGHTS FOR AN HOUR**, raising awareness on climate crisis. #earthHour2026



## Chrism Mass

Please join us for the Chrism Mass with Bishop Michael Kennedy.

Everyone is welcome to attend.

When: March 31st, Tuesday

Time: 7pm

Where: Sacred Heart Cathedral

*\*Plan to arrive 15-20mins early due to limited parking spaces.*



## Easter Raffle

**Why not take a book of 15 tickets for your family?**

Sell one ticket or sell them all – just make sure to return sold tickets by Monday 30 March as the Raffle will be drawn first thing Tuesday, 31st March! (Hand sold tickets and money to any server at the weekend Masses or take them to the Parish Office). We are still open for raffle donations!

And yes, we are still accepting donations towards the Raffle!



## Palms for Palm Sunday

Next weekend is Palm Sunday. A limited number of Palms will be distributed in Mass Centres on that day.

Feel free to bring your own piece of palm to Mass.



## Welcome to Our Newly Baptised!

We joyfully welcome those receiving the Sacrament of Baptism this weekend: At St. Joseph's, The Junction, *Maverick Archer Cajita*. At Sacred Heart Cathedral, *Olivia Cooper, Herbie Logan, Reginald Rayment, Ada Dynan, Elodie Anderson*



## Called to Know More – Invitation Launch “Let's Unpack that Evangelisation Word”

We are excited to launch Called to Know More, an invitation to explore the mission, story and life of the Church in a way that connects deeply with our everyday experience. Evangelisation! It's a word we hear often. But what does it really mean, here and now? What does it have to do with our work life? Our leadership? Our parish ministry? Perhaps more than we think.

Join us as we gently unpack this word and discover what might be stirring beneath it. No prior knowledge is needed, only curiosity and openness. We will gather once a month to listen, learn and reflect together. Come with your questions. Leave with something to ponder. We look forward to exploring this together. Light lunch provided.

Register: <https://tinyurl.com/CDMncalled>



**PROJECT  
COMPASSION**

## Fifth Sunday of Lent 21–22 March 2026

Since October 2023, Caritas Jerusalem staff in Gaza have endured displacement, personal loss, and danger alongside the communities they serve. Despite unimaginable challenges, they remain committed to providing lifesaving support, standing in solidarity with families enduring this conflict.



**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](http://www.projectcompassion.org.au/donate)

Or by calling: 1800 024 413

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



## Vinnies

We are looking for caring volunteers to help prepare and distribute food and essential support to people in need in our community. Volunteering with us is flexible - you can help us as often as your schedule allows. If you would like to make a difference, please contact Fran Barber - ph 0431 525 597

## Regular Opportunities for Prayer and Meditation

- **Tighes Hill Christian Meditation** (non-denominational) - each Monday 3.30pm at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church Tighes Hill



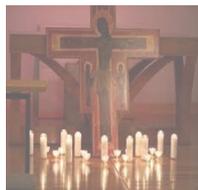
- **Living Waters Meditation Centre** - each Wednesday 7.30am and Friday 11.00am at 34 Kenrick St The Junction

- **The Rosary** - each Wednesday after 8.15am Mass at The Cathedral, First Saturday of the month after Mass and Novena at The Cathedral.



- **Divine Mercy Devotion** - first Sunday of the month 3.00-4.00pm at Christ the King, Mayfield West. No Divine Mercy devotion on April 5 and will resume on April 12th, 3-4pm, Divine Mercy Chaplet, Stations of the Cross, Readings from St. Faustina's Diary and Prayers

- **Taize Service** - first Sunday of the month 5.00 - 6.00pm at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, Tighes Hill, followed by a shared supper.



## Scriptural Context

### JESUS WEPT

"Jesus wept" is the shortest verse in the New Testament. Just two little words carry a world of emotion and speak volumes about Jesus.

Pope Leo I used this verse to highlight the two natures of Jesus, pointing out that in His humanity, Jesus wept for the death of his friend, but in His divinity Jesus raised Lazarus to life.

Lazarus and his sisters were close friends of Jesus and Jesus is clearly emotional about the death and its effect on Martha and Mary. That Jesus is about to restore Lazarus to life does not deny the grief and mourning at Lazarus' death



## Parish Group Meetings

**St Joseph's Prayer/Discussion Group** has commenced our 2026 program with the Wollongong Lenten Program. We meet on Thursdays during Lent at 9.30am in the meeting room at The Junction and will continue until Easter. All welcome. Contact Janet Tully on 0435 518 671.



**Book Club** next meeting is after Easter Sunday, April 12th, to discuss *Legacy* by Chris Hammer. If you would like to participate in book club meetings, please email: [newcparish@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:newcparish@mn.catholic.org.au)

**View, Chew, and Chat** is currently engaged in the Lenten program "Compassio". You are very welcome to join us on Wednesdays! To participate, please email the parish office: [newcparish@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:newcparish@mn.catholic.org.au)



**Faith Sharing on the Sunday Gospel** at Tighes Hill Church after 8am Mass on 22nd and 29th March 2026.

## Easter Food Blessing



You are invited to join with our Polish brothers and sisters Holy Saturday 4 April at 12 noon for the Easter Food Blessing.

Bring your basket or platter with:

- hard-boiled eggs (symbolizing new life and the empty tomb)
- bread (representing Christ, the Bread of Life)
- butter (for sacrifice and purity)
- meat, often ham or sausage (a festive protein after abstinence)
- salt (symbolizing purification)
- cake (the symbol of joy of Easter glory),
- decoration (fresh branches) and
- horseradish (the symbol of the harshness of daily life).

The food is then eaten on Easter Sunday as part of the Easter Celebrations.



## WHAT'S ON AT EPIC?

### Stations of the Cross—Every Friday 6pm

Join other young adults (18-35) on Friday nights during Lent at 6pm in The Cathedral to pray the **Stations of the Cross**. Together, we celebrate this sacred season by walking with Jesus in his Passion, drawing closer to him in prayer and to each other in fellowship. Come as you are, bring a friend, and journey with us toward Easter in hope.

### SAVE THE DATE — May 3rd, 5pm at the Cathedral EPIC YOUNG ADULTS: NEXT CHAPTER

EPIC is taking a breather over April but... save the date for the launch of our new vision and mission statements and upcoming events for the year!

Come along for 5pm Mass on May 3rd, followed by a gathering to hear about what's next for this group. Dinner and great company provided!

More details to come...

Want to know more?

Follow EPIC on Insta at @epicnewcastle or join the WhatsApp with the QR code —>



## Retreat Opportunities

### • Jamberoo Abbey Retreat Programs (this April)

[Abbey Retreat Programs – Jamberoo Abbey](#)

### Lord, Teach Us to Pray: The Aramaic Prayer of Jesus 10-12 April 2026 (Cost: \$150)

In this contemplative retreat we return to the very words Jesus spoke as we explore the Lord's Prayer in its original Aramaic, uncovering layers of meaning often lost in translation.

### He is risen!

18 April (Cost: \$60)

Inviting youth and young adults aged 16 – 35 to come for a day of reflection. The Lord is risen! Let us come and spend time sitting at the tomb and wait for his voice to call our name. On this day, we will come together for praise and worship and we will pray with the scripture on Jesus' resurrection.

For more information, please contact 02 4236 0011 Extension 114 or email [cottageretreats@jamberooabbey.org.au](mailto:cottageretreats@jamberooabbey.org.au)

## Parish Teams

**Promoters of Safeguarding:** Louise Outram, Cynthia Tamonan, Alex Tamonan, Sr Kath Williams rsm, Annie Evans.

**Bereavement Team:** Margaret Cox, Gail Lovell, Christopher Gregory, Margaret Beard, Margaret Newton, Jill O'Dell, Anne Millard (02) 4979 1252.

**St Joseph's Pastoral Team:** Contact the Parish Office.

**RCIA:** Contact Mary-Anne at the parish office. Visit our website to fill out the form.

**Sacramental Program:** Contact Mary-Anne at the Parish Office.

**Baptism team:** Meets on the first Tuesday of the month, with parents who are preparing for their children's baptism.

## Safeguarding

'Flu' season is upon us and the elderly especially need safeguarding. Sadly, there were approximately 1,701 deaths associated with influenza in Australia in 2025, the highest number recorded this century. This represents a sharp rise from 1,006 deaths in 2024 and 524 deaths in 2023. The majority of these deaths occurred in the over-65 age group.

For context, COVID-19 caused about 2,161 deaths in 2025, while respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) was associated with approximately 582 deaths. The increase in flu deaths was particularly notable during the second half of the year, from August to December 2025 with the emergence of a new flu variant, H3N2 Subclade K, combined with lower vaccination rates.

The major 2026 roll-out of vaccine commences in April and is FREE in NSW for children aged 6 months to under 5 years, Aboriginal people, pregnant women, people with an increased risk of complications from influenza, and people aged 65 years and over. Covid-19 boosters can be administered at the same time.



In 2025, there were over 3,000 NSW emergency departments attendances for influenza-like illness in children less than 5 years old, and over 600 hospital admissions. A needle-free 'nose spray' vaccination will also be available for children aged 2 years to under 5 years this year.



<https://officeofsafeguarding.org.au/>

## Diocesan Events

<https://tinyurl.com/cdmnevents>

**ALIVE Catholic Youth Launch:** 17 May, Trinity College, Adamstown

**Magdalene Awards:** 26 July, 9:30am - Sacred Heart Cathedral

**ALIVE Young Adults Retreat:** 17-19 July, Forster Travelling Exhibition of the Saint Carlo Acutis Pilgrim

**Relic:** 8-14 September

**ALIVE Youth Retreat:** 25-27 September, Lake Macquarie

**Renewed & Sent Parish Renewal Summit:** 1-3 October, St Gregory's Campbelltown

## Diocesan Resource Centre

**Location:** Corner Tudor and Parry Sts, Newcastle West.

**Opening Hours:** Mondays and Fridays, 10am to 4pm. Open 1st & 3rd Saturday of each month, 10am to 2pm. All resources are available to borrow; and are searchable on the library catalogue, which can be accessed through this link:

<https://tinyurl.com/DOMNLibrary>

OR use the QR code.

### EVENTS & ACTIVITIES AT THE RESOURCE CENTER

#### PRAYER SCRIPTURE GROUP MEETING

**Every Saturday, 2:30pm (during Lent)**

The Praying Scripture group has started meeting on Saturdays to pray and reflect on the Lenten Gospels. We will continue to meet after Easter with a particular focus on the Gospel of John this year. You can contact Wayne Caruana for more information on 0466 631394.



#### MN Kids Holiday Program

**7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> April, 9:00am-1:00pm**

\$10 per child/per day, lunch included! Program is open to children aged 6-12 years and will include team games, science experiments, bible stories and music.

Register: <https://>

[MNKidsHolidayProgram.eventbrite.com.au](https://MNKidsHolidayProgram.eventbrite.com.au)

Contact: Nicola Graham 0417 773 444

## Business Owners / Employers

If you have job openings available in your shops or businesses and would like to offer fellow parishioners the opportunity to apply, please contact the Parish Office. We are opening this initiative to help connect employers with individuals seeking work, strengthening our community by supporting one another.



## Called & Gifted Discernment Process

Mission & Evangelisation is working with the Catherine of Siena Institute to offer the Called & Gifted Discernment Process this year. We will again offer this life-changing discernment process, inviting you to discover your God-given charisms. Commencing in May, step forward in faith and help our parishes thrive through use of your gifts. Express your interest here:

<https://tinyurl.com/CalledandGifted2026>

## Food Baskets for the Needy

Blue bins are available in our churches:

- |                         |                            |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| ✓ UHT milk/Cereal       | ✓ Biscuits/custard/jelly   |
| ✓ Spreads/ tinned goods | ✓ Toothpaste/toothbrush    |
| ✓ Pasta/Rice/Sauce      | ✓ Soap/shampoo/conditioner |
| ✓ Tea/coffee            | ✓ deodorants               |

Please do not donate these products >>

- × Peanut butter
- × Food that easily gets spoiled
- × Expired goods

## Resources for Lent

### **Lent 2026: I am light**

Jesuit and Ignatian Spirituality Australia (JISA) is offering a daily prayer resource for Lent, focussed on being children of light.

You can see a **sample** here:

<https://tinyurl.com/JISAsampleLent>

Each day a 2:30 minute video will arrive in your email, with reflective images, music, the word of God and a simple prayer written by Michael Hansen SJ.

You can register here:

<https://tinyurl.com/JISAregerLent>



### **Lent 2026 - The Journey Home**

This is a daily reflection resource for Lent, written by the former Archbishop of Brisbane, Mark Coleridge.

Here is a **sample**:

<https://tinyurl.com/TheJourneyHome2026sample>



It is designed with both individuals and groups in mind, offering simple, easy-to-follow prompts for small group leaders to use each Sunday during Lent. Each weekday includes a prayer, a scripture text, some thoughts to provoke reflection and/or discussion and a closing prayer.

To order, use this link:

<https://tinyurl.com/Lent2026TheJourneyHome>



## Employment Opportunities

**Family Engagement Coordinator:** Catholic Schools is seeking a Temporary Full-Time Family Engagement Coordinator, who works with the Principal to support and strengthen family engagement within the school, church and wider community. The period is from 20 April 2026 to 27 January 2027 and will work across four schools in the Newcastle region: Trinity Catholic College, St Columba's Adamstown, St James' Kotara and St Kevin's Cardiff. Further details can be found on our website:

<https://tinyurl.com/CDMNSchools>

### Cessnock Correctional Centre – Catholic Chaplain:

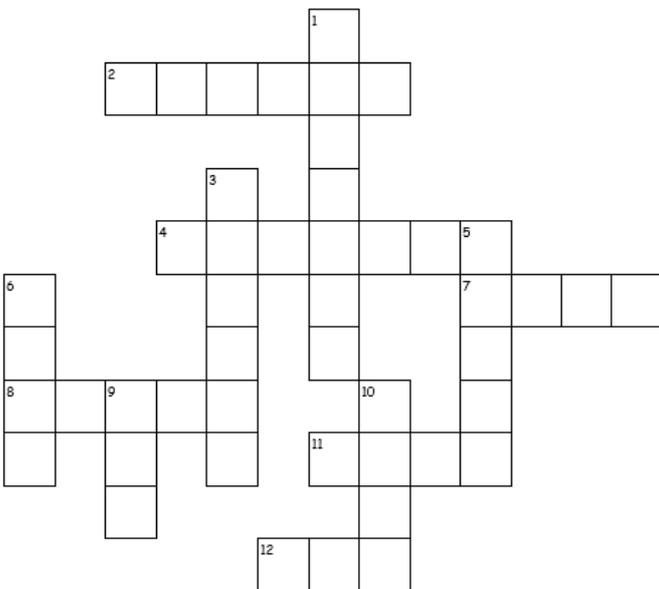
Mission & Evangelisation is seeking a full-time Correctional Centre Chaplain for the purpose of providing a ministry of healing and pastoral presence. Our Chaplains aim to provide people in custody the tools to become more at one with themselves, with others and with God. The ministry offers inmates the best chance of successfully reintegrating into society once their sentence is complete. Pastoral and spiritual care and support is also provided to inmates' families and centre staff. For further details email:

[james.camden@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:james.camden@mn.catholic.org.au)

## CROSSWORD

### Lazarus comes back to life

Jn 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 31-45



#### Across

- 2: a female sibling
- 4: Jesus raised him from death
- 7: a place where the dead are laid to rest
- 8: fabric
- 11: the front of your head
- 12: to shed tears

#### Down

- 1: Lazarus' tomb was in this town
- 3: Lazarus' sister
- 5: rock
- 6: unwell
- 9: the opposite of in
- 10: Martha's sister

## Donation Options

For anyone who wishes to make donations to the parish via direct deposit: Details are provided below for the individual parishes.

Account name: **CDF** BSB: **066739**

Account number: **see below\***

Reference: **Donation [Surname]**

### \*Account numbers:

Newcastle Parish - Account no: 100008696

Mayfield Parish - Account no: 100007169

Stockton Parish - Account no: 100003308

### OR

Scan a QR Code:



ST. BENEDICT'S INNER NEWCASTLE PARISHES  
Sacred Heart Cathedral | St. Joseph's Junction  
St. Mary's Star of the Sea | Immaculate Heart of Mary High Hill



CHRIST THE KING CHURCH  
MAYFIELD



ST PETER IN CHAINS CHURCH  
STOCKTON

## Bequests

To help our Catholic Pastoral Region continue its mission of proclaiming the Good News, you might consider including us in your Will. You just need to specify which parish(es) you would like to help.

## Safeguarding

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle has an abiding commitment to promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. If you have any concerns for a child or vulnerable adult please contact the Office of Safeguarding: 02 4979 1390, or email

[childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au) or visit [www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au](http://www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au)

## Today's Liturgy of the Word

### First Reading: Ez 37:12-14

*I shall put my spirit in you, and you will live.*



### Responsorial Psalm: Ps 129. R. v.7

(R.) With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.

1. Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord,  
Lord, hear my voice!  
O let your ears be attentive  
to the voice of my pleading. (R.)
2. If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt,  
Lord, who would survive?  
But with you is found forgiveness:  
for this we revere you. (R.)
3. My soul is waiting for the Lord,  
I count on his word.  
My soul is longing for the Lord  
more than watchman for daybreak.  
(Let the watchman count on daybreak  
and Israel on the Lord.) (R.)
4. Because with the Lord there is mercy  
and fullness of redemption,  
Israel indeed he will redeem  
from all its iniquity. (R.)

### Second Reading: Rom 8:8-11

*If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, then he will give life to your own mortal bodies.*

### Gospel Acclamation: Jn 11:25. 26

*Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, King of Endless Glory!*

### Gospel: Jn 11:1-45

*I am the resurrection and the life.*



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## Next Week's Readings

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord, Year A

Is 50:4-7

Phil 2:6-11

Mt 26:14-27:66



## Scripture Commentary

It must be difficult for somebody who has never experienced love to understand the Gospels. They



are so full of different emotions, many of them tender. Just think of the beautiful reconciliation between Jesus and Peter after the resurrection. Jesus allows Peter to say that he loves him on no less than three occasions. Thankfully, most of us can write down a long list of people we have loved and who have loved us. Many names would appear on both lists! We keep a special place in our hearts and prayers for the people we know who have died. Even after a long time, their memory will still bring a tear to our eyes. That sorrow comes from a place of deep gratitude. God changes the world one heart at a time.

When we encounter today's Gospel, the story of the raising of Lazarus, we are in a world of emotion.

Martha and Mary are grieving for their brother. Jesus loves these two women. Thomas, the twin, is full of bravado and bluster, just as he was later when he wanted proof of the resurrection. Both Martha and Mary are disappointed, even angry, that Jesus has not come sooner. Jesus weeps at the grave of his friend. The mourners who have come to comfort the family must also have been sensitive to the situation. When Jesus says, 'I am the resurrection and the life', he is not explaining an idea. He is responding to the deepest longings of our hearts, as he always does. Today's Psalm reminds us, 'My soul is longing for the Lord more than the watchman for daybreak.'

Over the last few weeks, we have shared some of the stories presented to us by Caritas Australia to make us more aware of the inspirational work we can support through Project Compassion. They call us to *Unite Against Poverty*.

This week Project Compassion asks us to learn more about the work of Caritas Australia in humanitarian emergencies. There are so many situations around the world that require a timely response. Caritas is active in the aftermath of earthquakes, floods, storms, plagues, drought and failed harvests. Of course, there will be time to enquire about the causes and to ask if climate change may have been a factor or if poor building standards caused problems. But first, people and communities need to survive, and Caritas has a lot of experience in this area. Your generosity to Project Compassion makes a wonderful difference to people in need. Thank you for helping to bring light to dark places. Jesus says about Lazarus, 'unbind him, let him go free.' We too can set people free.

