



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 26 April 2026

4th Sunday of Easter

World Day of Prayer for Vocations



Dear Parish Family,

I have celebrated and marked ANZAC day formally as a Priest now for 33 years. It is a day that I have always found moving and remarkable, more so since my time as a full-time military chaplain and with service during times of conflict. In 2004 I remembered the day on the sands of the Middle East. I mark it as a day of service and sacrifice. I reflect on the men and women of our Nation who with fear, anxiety, or even excitement, committed to defend our country Australia, not only in World War 1 but in all those conflicts our government committed us/them too. They volunteered or were volunteered to defend the weak, vulnerable and innocent in far flung lands. I know that some of them 'signed up' with romantic notions of adventure. None of them were prepared for what they saw, experienced and witnessed. Those that came home were not the same people who left our shores.

In the early days, it was often seen as a 'man's' job. Even in the very first wars, young women served in military hospitals and supported behind the lines the 'work' at the front. They were caught up, often, in front line offensives or defending their posts. There is a significant list of young women who served, were taken as prisoners of war, and who ultimately lost their lives. Their names are listed among the dead, on war memorials and on headstones across the world. Our sisters laid to rest, next to our brothers in foreign soil. Amongst all of them our First Nations people who, for decades, were unsung heroes and forgotten. They served faithfully and with great courage.

We should also remember the families who waved their loved one goodbye and then waited patiently for their return. Those families, too, were called to pay the ultimate sacrifice, either mourning the loss of a loved one, 'soldiering on' while a loved one was away, or supporting those that came home. We, as a nation, are more aware of the psychological damage that war and conflict, critical moments, inflict on the soul. Whilst we often get through the pain and suffering, it leaves an indelible mark. A mark reflecting what was endured by the survivor, their families and their communities. ANZAC day is a day to remember those sacrifices too. We lost a generation of men and women.

ANZAC day also says something about what we believe of ourselves as a nation. The battlefields of Gallipoli, particularly, are reflective of the enduring qualities of what we would say are implicit in the Australian character. We see ourselves as battlers, who never leave a mate behind; we dig in against adversity and hold our ground; we are larrikins with a 'black' sense of humour - often seeing the funny in the tragic; we take the mickey out of everyone with no sense of malice - simply good humour (not every new person appreciates that, I know); we defend the underdog; we don't take ourselves too seriously; we work till the job is done and we lift and fight 'above our weight'; and whilst we don't think we have an accent, the world seems to know our particular voice and phrases. It's what we say and celebrate; hopefully it is still true.

I hope all of you have, like me, managed to participate in one or other of the ANZAC day services. If you read this on Friday, hope you make time on the 25th - it really is part of who and what Australia is as a nation. ***Lest we forget.***

Greg, Parish Priest

Parish Priest

Fr Greg Barker

Assisting Clergy

Fr Niel Olano
Fr Ramille Bigcas
Deacon Kevin Gadd

Parish Administration

McAuley Building, 242 Parry St,
Newcastle West, 2302
PO Box 6, The Junction 2291
Phone: (02) 4979 1101
Email:

newcparish@mn.catholic.org.au

Website:

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)

4th week of Easter

Mon 27 Apr

7:30am Mass @ The Cathedral

Tues 28 Apr *St Peter Chanel, priest, martyr*

7:30am Mass @ The Cathedral

9:00am Mass @ Stockton

10:30am Mass at Badcoe House, Newcastle West

Wed 29 Apr *St Catherine of Sienna, virgin, doctor*

7:30am Mass @ The Cathedral

9:00am Mass @ Mayfield West

Thurs 30 Apr

7:30am Mass @ The Cathedral

9:00am Mass @ Stockton

10.15am St Columban's Class Mass

5:30pm Mass at Mission to Seafarers, Wickham

Fri 1 May

9:30am Mass @ The Cathedral to mark the retirement of Liz Doyle

10:15am Mass @ The Junction (anointing)

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

12:05pm Mass @ The Cathedral

Sat 2 May *St Athanasius, bishop, doctor*

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

5th Sunday of Easter

Sat 2 May

5:30pm Vigil Mass @ The Cathedral

5:30pm Vigil Mass @ The Junction

5:30pm Vigil Mass @ Mayfield West

Sun 3 May

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

There will be no Novena Mass and Reconciliation on Saturday 23 May 2026. On that day there will be a 10am Mass, during which Christopher Voigt will be ordained to the Diaconate.

The parish office will be closed on the public holiday: Monday, 27 April.

Prayer Requests



RECENTLY DECEASED: Tracy Press, Patricia Haskew, Sr Clare McCudden rsj

ANNIVERSARIES: Mary Williams, Glenise Olive, Alois Schmitz, Don Tischenko, Patrick O'Neill, Tony Peart, Ted Hanson, Jim Rabbitt, Clem Casey, Doug Delaney, Tony Tamplin jnr, Sr Anne Murray rsm

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, Leonetta Papichio, John Woods, Hoagy VanEwyk, Pat Fitzpatrick, Martyn Docherty

Request for Assistance

We have a foreign student who needs some support financially. Is there someone, a company or business for example, that could offer a donation towards his fees? He is from a poor country and has limited support financially from home. If you feel able or would like to have a conversation about this need, please call me, Fr Greg 0417 321 209.

Our Columbaria

Those in our Columbaria with April anniversaries:

At Sacred Heart Cathedral:

Leo Burke
Beryl Coferos
Lorraine Driscoll
Mary Duggan
Kathleen Gibson
Monica Hayes
Joy Patricia Jarrett
Mary Noreen Long
Alice Martin

Redento Quaggiotto
Patricia Mather
Krystyna Mazalo
Ian Edward McDonald
Cary McNabb
Laurel May Murray
Nola Margaret Phillips
Frank Keith Pilgrim
Sandra Rufo
Henrietta Vujeva
Elaine Iris Wilson

At St Joseph's:

Michael Johns
John Joseph Willcock
John Barber
Bruce Buckland
Joseph Callen
Mark John Chappell
Elsie Craig
Norma Patricia De Lore
Harry Fleming
Peter Groombridge
Kathleen Hiscox

Warren Kelly
Milheim Lettoof
Joan Nelson
Jeremiah O'Doherty
Frank O'Sullivan
Ellen Palmer
Mossie Smith
Edna Sowerby
Lorna Wakely
Leo Wallace
Jim Heaney
Clare Martin

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

EPIC Young Adults – Next Chapter



With a renewed focus on engaging, encouraging, and empowering young

people, this is an exciting time for EPIC Young Adults to head into its next chapter and we want you to be involved! All young adults (18-35) are invited to come along for 5pm Mass in the Cathedral, followed by dinner and a chance to hear about upcoming events, what's next for this group, and how you can contribute.

Location: Sacred Heart Cathedral

Date: Sunday 3rd May **Time:** 5:00pm

ALIVE Catholic Youth Launch

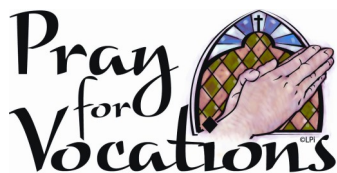
Witness how the Holy Spirit is moving in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle as we launch ALIVE - a dynamic and exciting event that will showcase a new diocesan identity for young people that seeks to draw them into a personal relationship with Christ they feel confident to share with others. Music will be led by a nationally acclaimed worship team and a number of exciting plans will be announced alongside some good news stories of where ALIVE is already taking shape in schools and parishes. Visit the Diocesan events page to secure your free seat. All ages are welcome

<https://tinyurl.com/ALIVECDMN>



World Day of Prayer for Vocations

This 4th Sunday of Easter, also known as Good Shepherd Sunday, is the 63rd annual World Day of Prayer for Vocations. Initiated by Pope Paul VI in 1963, this day focuses on praying for vocations to the priesthood, diaconate, consecrated life, and missionary life. The purpose is to encourage individuals to listen to God's call and to pray for labourers in the Church.



God our Father, You made each of us to use our gifts in the Body of Christ. We ask that You inspire young people whom you call to priesthood and

consecrated life to courageously follow Your will. Send workers into Your great harvest so that the Gospel is preached, the poor are served with love, the suffering are comforted, and Your people are strengthened by the sacraments. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen



The Most Reverend Michael Kennedy and the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle cordially invite

The People of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle to the Ordination to the Permanent Diaconate of **Mr Christopher Voigt**

by

Most Reverend Michael Kennedy on Saturday, 23 May 2026 at 10am

in Sacred Heart Cathedral, 841 Hunter St, Newcastle West

All are Welcome



Christian Life Program

Consecrated in the truth,
Be Christ to other

Orientation Day

17 May, 2026 - 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Sacred Heart Cathedral - Hamilton
Toohey Room, 841 Hunter Street
Newcastle West

Join us to learn more about the CLP Program
Light meals will be provided, and child-minding is available

RSVP:
0411 409 329 - Bro. Bong Ampon 0431 133 583 - Sis. Rose Ampon
0477 741 502 - Bro. Alex Tamonan 0411 081 374 - Sis. Cynthia Tamonan

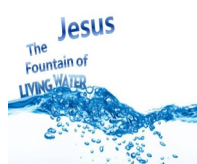
Return and Earn - We need you!

Thanks to those who have volunteered so far. Fr Niel will be arranging a meeting soon. Please help if you can. Your time commitment can be as small or large as you wish. This "Return and Earn" initiative, regarding bottles and cans and cartons, is a way to **care for the earth** by recycling. It's also a way to **care for others**, as the funds raised will be distributed in this instance to Caritas Australia, Catholic Mission, St Vincent de Paul, and to the Good Friday appeal. Please contact the parish office - We'd love to hear from you!



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

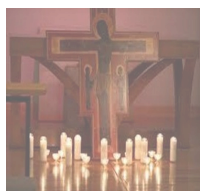
- **The Rosary** - each Wednesday after 7.30am Mass at The Cathedral, First Saturday of the month after Mass and Novena at The Cathedral.



- **Divine Mercy Devotion** - first Sunday of the month 3.00-4.00pm at Christ the King, Mayfield West.



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




Rosary During the Month of May

- During the month of May, we will pray the rosary after each weekday Mass **In the Cathedral** – 7.30am Mon to Thurs, 12.05pm Friday.
- **Catholic Mission** is providing the opportunity to pray the rosary during the month of May:

 **Dates:** Monday to Friday, 1 May – 31 May

 **Time:** 2:00pm – 3:00pm

 **Location:** Online via Teams

Teams link: tinyurl.com/RosaryPrayer26



Welcome to Our Newly Baptised!



We joyfully welcome those receiving the Sacrament of Baptism this weekend:

At The Cathedral: Lorenzo Carpenter, Rhys Moran and Summa Porter

2026 National Count of Attendance YOU ARE COUNTED ON

This May, the Australian Catholic Church participates in the National Count of Attendance.

Every Parish, every Mass, every body.

Help us accurately plan for the future.



Parish Group Meetings

Book Club next meeting is Sunday, May 3rd, to discuss *Remarkable Truths of Alfie Bains* by Sarah Clutton. If you would like to participate in book club meetings, please email: newcparish@mn.catholic.org.au



View, Chew, and Chat: You are very welcome to join us on Wednesdays! This coming Wednesday we don't meet. The following Wednesday, 6 May, we will look at Parousia chapter 4. To participate, please email the parish office:

newcparish@mn.catholic.org.au

St Joseph's Prayer/Discussion

Group will resume on Thursday 30 April at 9.30am, at the Junction Meeting Room. For inquiries phone Janet on 0435 518 671.



Community Kitchens



The Community Kitchens run by CatholicCare can be accessed by anyone who needs a warm meal or support. Local locations are:

Adamstown: Every Wednesday, 11am to 1pm at 486 Glebe Road, Adamstown

Newcastle: Every Saturday, 5.30pm to 6.30pm (6.30pm to 7.30pm during Daylight Savings) at Civic Park, King Street, Newcastle.

Phone: 4979 1120

Food Baskets for the Needy

Blue bins located in our churches are available for your donations:

Items of dry goods or tin food can be placed in the blue bins located at our churches.

When donating please check expiry dates. We ask that you do not donate peanut butter. Any of the following non-perishable items are welcome: UHT milk, cereal, spreads, tinned goods, pasta, rice, pasta sauces, tea, coffee, biscuits, custard, jelly, toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant.



The Chuckle

Q. Why should we be encouraged by the story of Jonah and the whale?

A. Because Jonah was down in the mouth, but came out all right.



Marian Consecration Retreat

Saturdays: 2 – 30 May



You are invited to attend a self-directed online Marian Consecration Retreat, facilitated by members of the Newcastle Charismatic Renewal Group, during the **Saturdays of the month of May**.

The sessions will be held at 11am in the Toohey Room (Catholic Diocese of Newcastle Precinct, Newcastle West) for the first week and then the Diocesan Resource Centre, adjacent to the Cathedral, for the remaining weeks.

The retreat is free to attend although you will need to purchase the book to read the daily reflections throughout the 33 days. Please contact **Wayne Caruana on 046 6631 394** or register via the QR Code.



Our Catholic Schools

St Joseph's Primary School: Karen McGinlay (*Principal*)
Union Street, The Junction NSW 2291
(02) 4961 2827
www.merewether.catholic.edu.au

Holy Family Primary School: Shannon McGregor (*Principal*)
Pell Street, Merewether NSW 2291
(02) 4963 3009
www.merewetherbeach.catholic.edu.au

St Columban's Primary School: Penny Banister (*Principal*)
Church Street, Mayfield NSW 2304
(02) 4968 3315
www.mayfieldsc.catholic.edu.au

St Peter's Primary School: Dennis Nolan (*Principal*)
Dunbar St, Stockton NSW 2295
(02) 4928 1861
www.stockton.catholic.edu.au

St Francis Xavier's College: Greg Ptolemy (*Principal*)
Parkway Avenue, Hamilton NSW 2303
(02) 4961 2863
www.hamilton.catholic.edu.au

San Clemente High School: Emma South (*Principal*)
78 Havelock St, Mayfield NSW 2304
(02) 4014 7300
www.mayfieldsanc.catholic.edu.au

St Dominic's Catholic College: Rachel Jones (*Principal*)
76 Havelock St, Mayfield NSW 2304
(02) 4968 1295
www.mayfieldsd.catholic.edu.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, Anne Millard.

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

The Australian three-tiered safeguarding system for children and vulnerable adults operates at the national, state/territory and the organisational/community levels. **For our region, the Catholic Church organisational component is conducted by the Maitland-Newcastle Diocesan Office of Safeguarding** while the community component is the responsibility of each of our 32 parishes.

The **Maitland-Newcastle Office of Safeguarding (OoS)** was established in 2019 by then Bishop, Bill Wright. This office replaces the former Diocesan safeguarding agency, Zimmerman Services, particularly among those who participate in the life of the Diocese as part of our parish schools and communities. The OoS also facilitates compliance with government statutory obligations and diocesan procedures/protocols relevant to safeguarding through -

- working with NSW Police, the Office of the Children's Guardian, the Department of Communities and Justice, other statutory authorities, and specialist authorities within the Catholic Church in Australia;
- the provision of an intake service that analyses concerns for children and vulnerable adults, provides advice and support to parish personnel, ensures statutory reporting obligations are met and ensures appropriate follow up to complaints when warranted;
- conducting investigations of parish personnel who are alleged to have abused a child or vulnerable adult, or breached their professional standards.



Diocesan Events

<https://tinyurl.com/cdmnevents>

- **Stella Maris – Mission to Seafarers Mass:** 5:30pm, 30 April, 96 Hannell Street Wickham
- **ALIVE Catholic Youth Launch:** 24 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.



Formation Film

Jesus Revolution – A film based on the true story of a 1960's teenager, a pastor and a Christian hippie.

Saturday 02 May 2026, 11:00am – 1:00pm, Diocesan Resource Centre – Cnr Parry & Tudor St Newcastle

Join us as we watch the film and share morning tea, lunch, and robust discussion. All are welcome!

Registration (Essential): <https://forms.office.com/r/KYdg9Q3DTq> or call Mary on 0409033449

Listen to the Heart: Moving Forward Team

Saturday 02 May 2026, 8:30am – 12:30pm, Therry Centre - East Maitland

Join Fr Darryl Mackie and Aunty Wanda Smith in an informative morning to increase our knowledge and understanding of the deep spirituality of First Nations people, connection to Country and relationships with Faith. Register on the Diocesan website:

<https://tinyurl.com/cdmnevents>

Called & Gifted

What if God has placed gifts within you that are still waiting to be discovered? This is not simply a program. It is a process of prayer, reflection and discernment that helps you recognise how the Holy Spirit is already working through your life, often in ways you may not yet fully see or name. Learn More:

<https://tinyurl.com/cdmnCALLEDAND-GIFTED>

Diocesan Cursillo 3-day Course

Do you wonder how to be more fully alive? If so, then you may like to consider attending our Cursillo 3-day course. The annual Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle 2026 Cursillo 3 days will be held from 11-14th June at Rathmines with the theme "Joy of the Lord is my strength". Cursillo is a short course which will enrich your faith for the rest of your life. It is Christ-centred, based on gospel values and will be asking each participant "How can I BE Christian in my many everyday environments?" Learn More: <https://tinyurl.com/cdmncursillo>

Palms - Two IMPACTFUL Sessions!



Join Palms International Volunteering for two special online sessions where you'll learn about our [diverse assignments](#) suited to your qualifications. In April meet past Palms volunteers and discover how skill-exchange makes a lasting impact in communities, or join our May session for a live crossing to Timor Leste and see how lives are changing today. Go to palms.org.au/events.

Marian Talks—Mackillop Parish

Behold Your Mother:

Explaining and Defending the 4 Marian Dogmas

Nationally known speaker Simon Carrington, from Fire Up Ministries, will lead us in looking at:

- Mary, Mother Of God
- The Immaculate Conception Of The Blessed Virgin Mary
- Mary's Perpetual Virginity
- Mary's Bodily Assumption

Sessions will be on **Fridays** at 7 Milson St Charlestown, commencing with **Holy Rosary at 6:30pm** and the **Talk at 7:00pm:**

8 May, 15 May, 22 May, 29 May

Each session is self-contained, so you can attend any number of sessions.

While not compulsory, a **donation of \$20 per talk** would be appreciated to help cover the donation to the presenter and refreshments.

Prayer for Seafarers

Please keep Seafarers in your prayers as they try and navigate through the shipping lanes of the world, heading to and from our ports here in Australia in this troubled time with the war in the Middle East. Join us for Mass at the Stella Maris, Mission to Seafarers Centre, 96 Hannell Street Wickham, 5.30pm Thursday 30th April. All are welcome.



Heavenly Father, as our seafarers embark on their journeys, we humbly implore You to guide them through treacherous waters, turbulent storms and war-torn waterways. Grant them safe

passage, and may Your divine light shine brightly upon their vessels. Keep them shielded from harm so they may return safely to their loved ones. Amen

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 Tighes Hill



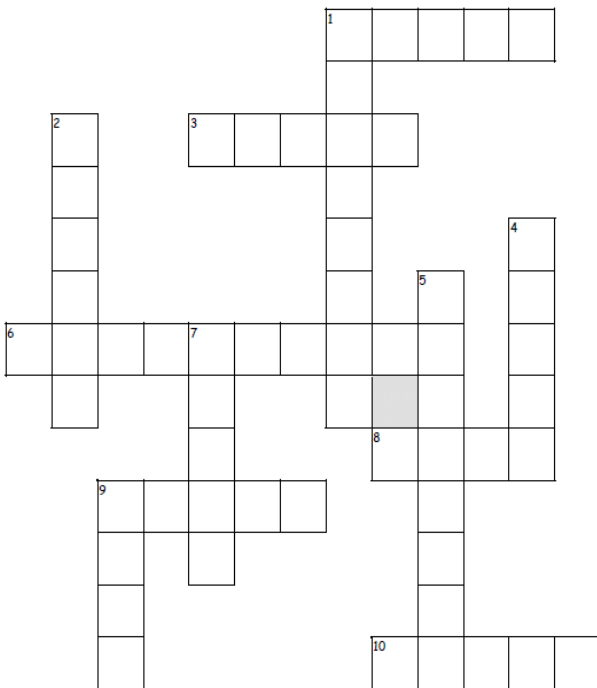
CHRIST THE KING CHURCH
MAYFIELD



ST PETER IN CHAINS CHURCH
STOCKTON

CROSSWORD

The Lord is my shepherd



Acts 2:14a. 36-41
Ps 23:1-3a. 3b-4, 6, R. v.1
Jn 10:1-10

Across

- 1: an animal that is covered in fleece
- 3: this man stood with the eleven disciples and spoke to the crowd
- 6: the third person of the Trinity
- 8: we call a person by their _ _ _ _
- 9: Peter spoke to about _ _ _ _ thousand people
- 10: a large group of people

Down

- 1: someone who looks after sheep
- 2: take the path of a leader
- 4: the sound of someone speaking
- 5: a person whom you do not know
- 7: a parable or tale
- 9: to go back the other way

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 or visit www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au

Today's Liturgy of the Word



First Reading: Acts 2:14. 36-41

God has made Jesus both Lord and Christ.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 22:1-6. R. v.1

(R.) The Lord is my shepherd;

there is nothing I shall want.

1. The Lord is my shepherd;

there is nothing I shall want.

Fresh and green are the pastures

where he gives me repose.

Near restful waters he leads me,

to revive my drooping spirit. (R.)

2. He guides me along the right path;

he is true to his name.

If I should walk in the valley of darkness

no evil would I fear.

You are there with your crook and your staff;

with these you give me comfort. (R.)

3. You have prepared a banquet for me

in the sight of my foes.

My head you have anointed with oil;

my cup is overflowing. (R.)

4. Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me

all the days of my life.

In the Lord's own house shall I dwell

for ever and ever. (R.)

Second Reading: 1 Pt 2:20-25

You had gone astray but now you have come back to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

Gospel Acclamation: Jn 10:14

Alleluia, alleluia!

I am the good shepherd, says the Lord;

I know my sheep, and mine know me.

Alleluia!

Gospel: Jn 10:1-10

I am the gate of the sheepfold.



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Next Week's Readings

5th Sunday of Easter, Year A

Acts 6:1-7

1 Pet 2: 4-9

Jn 14: 1-12



Scripture Commentary

Accompanied by the other apostles, **Peter** addresses a large crowd of Jewish people. He declares that God has made Jesus Lord and Christ. Lord (kýrios), a term of respect, was also the Greek word used as a substitution for YHWH, the personal name of God. Christ (christós) is the Greek translation for messiah, anointed one. The people who hear Peter are cut to the heart with remorse. They realise that they put to death the Holy One, God's anointed. Peter calls them to repentance (metánoia), a total change of heart, an interior disposition that will call for a new way of life. The Spirit is the promise of this change, and baptism is the rite that marks it.

The psalm opens with a metaphor that sets the tone of the entire song. It is the responsibility of the shepherd to find pastures that will provide enough grazing and abundant water for the entire flock, to lead them there without allowing any of the sheep to stray and be lost, to guard them from predators or dangers of any kind, and to attend to their every need. Such a characterisation of the Lord implies trust that God will discharge all of these responsibilities. The psalmist is confident of the Lord's protection. This image also suggests a host who prepares a lavish banquet. The psalmist has been under the loving guidance of the Lord and will remain there forever.

The author of **1 Peter** discusses the implications of following Christ. First he exhorts the disciples to imitate Jesus' manner of suffering. He knows that it might take a special grace from God to be patient when one suffers for having done good, but he believes that the Christian calling requires just such a disposition. The innocent suffering of Christ is then described in terms that recall a passage from one of the Suffering Servant Songs of the prophet Isaiah. Finally, the image of the shepherd is used to indicate that Jesus is the shepherd and his Christian disciples are the flock. Although at times they wander away from him, they will be safe and will prosper only if they follow his lead.

In the **gospel**, Jesus uses several features from sheep herding to characterise the relationship between himself and his followers. First he identifies himself as the shepherd and contrasts the way he guides, guards and nurtures the sheep with the way others might regard the sheep only as potential objects of immediate ill-gotten profit. For their part, the sheep will recognise the sound of their shepherd's voice and will follow him. Jesus then uses the technical phrase 'I am' in his characterisation of himself as the gate. Those who go through this gate will be safe within the pen. As both shepherd and gate of the sheepfold, Jesus is concerned with the welfare of the sheep.

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Dianne Bergant CSA was a Professor of Biblical Studies at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, where she taught from 1978 to 2014. She holds a BS in Elementary Education from Marian College, Fond du Lac, WI; an MA and PhD in Biblical Languages and Literature from St Louis University.