



# JESUS, THE GOOD SHEPHERD PARISH

~ East Lake Macquarie ~


◆ St Francis Xavier's Belmont ◆ St Patrick's Swansea ◆ St Pius X Windale ◆

· FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER · YEAR B · 28 APRIL 2024 ·

## Parish Presbytery

**Parish Priest:** Fr Gerard Mackie PP  
**Postal Address:** PO Box 277  
BELMONT NSW 2280  
**Presbytery Phone:** 02 4945 1244

## Parish Office

**Accounts and Administration Officer:** Mrs Liza Ruitenbach  
**Street Address:** 40 Ernest Street  
BELMONT NSW 2280  
**Postal Address:** PO Box 277  
BELMONT NSW 2280  
**Office Phone:** 02 4945 4402  
**Email:** [elmparish@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:elmparish@mn.catholic.org.au)  
**Facebook:** [Jesus the Good Shepherd Parish-East Lake Macquarie](https://www.facebook.com/Jesus-the-Good-Shepherd-Parish-East-Lake-Macquarie)  
**Parish Webpage:** Please use QR Code to access parish webpage at <https://www.mn.catholic.org.au>  
  
**Columbarium:** All enquiries via Parish Office

## Office Hours

**Monday:** 8:00AM to 3:30PM  
**Wednesday:** 8:00AM to 4:30PM  
**Thursday:** 11:30AM to 4:30PM

## Schools

### St Francis Xavier's Catholic Primary School Belmont

**Principal:** Mrs Danielle Reed  
**Street Address:** 42 Ernest Street  
BELMONT NSW 2280  
**Postal Address:** PO Box 206  
BELMONT NSW 2280  
**Phone:** 02 4945 2404  
**Email:** [admin@belmont.catholic.edu.au](mailto:admin@belmont.catholic.edu.au)  
**Website:** [www.belmont.catholic.edu.au](http://www.belmont.catholic.edu.au)  
**OOSH:** <https://stnicholasoosh.org.au/belmont>

### St Patrick's Catholic Primary School Swansea

**Principal:** Ms Lucy Harvey  
**Street Address:** 213 Northcote Avenue  
SWANSEA NSW 2281  
**Postal Address:** PO Box 141  
SWANSEA NSW 2281  
**Phone:** 02 4971 1560  
**Email:** [admin@swansea.catholic.edu.au](mailto:admin@swansea.catholic.edu.au)  
**Website:** [www.swansea.catholic.edu.au](http://www.swansea.catholic.edu.au)

### St Pius X Catholic Primary School Windale

**Principal:** Mr Stephen Pryde  
**Street Address:** 2 Lake Street  
WINDALE NSW 2306  
**Postal Address:** As above  
**Phone:** 02 4948 8467  
**Email:** [admin@windale.catholic.edu.au](mailto:admin@windale.catholic.edu.au)  
**Website:** [www.windale.catholic.edu.au](http://www.windale.catholic.edu.au)

## Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle

**Bishop:** Bishop Michael Kennedy  
**Street Address:** 841 Hunter Street  
NEWCASTLE WEST NSW 2302  
**Postal Address:** PO Box 780  
NEWCASTLE NSW 2300  
**Phone Number:** 02 4979 1200  
**Email:** [chancery@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:chancery@mn.catholic.org.au)  
**Website:** [www.mn.catholic.org.au](http://www.mn.catholic.org.au)

## Liturgical Celebrations

### Weekday Masses

**Monday:** 8:30AM Belmont  
**Tuesday:** 8:30AM Windale  
**Wednesday:** 8:30AM Swansea  
**Thursday:** 8:30AM Belmont  
**Friday:** 8:30AM Swansea  
**Saturday:** 8:30AM Belmont

### Sunday Masses

**Saturday:** 5:00PM Swansea  
**Sunday:** 7:30AM Windale  
9:00AM Belmont

## Rosary

We invite everyone to join in and pray the Rosary daily after the 8:30AM weekday Mass from Monday to Saturday.

## Feast Days

3 May Saints Philip and James, Apostles  
14 May Saint Matthias, Apostle  
19 May Pentecost  
29 Jun Saints Peter and Paul, Apostles  
3 Jul Saint Thomas, Apostle  
22 Jul Saint Mary Magdalene

## Mass at Jesus the Good Shepherd

The parish continues to follow relevant health advice. The following information is provided so that parishioners and visitors may know what to expect while attending Mass.

- ✓ NSW Health still recommends **physical distancing**.
- ✓ **Hand sanitiser** is recommended and provided.
- ✓ The wearing of a face **mask** can help protect you and those around you. Masks are available at the church entrance.
- ✓ Pick up your **bulletin** and take it home with you afterwards. Bulletins are no longer re-used.
- ✓ **Holy Water** is available and changed regularly.
- ✓ Select your **seat** and allow space between families / households.
- ✓ **Singing** is permissible.
- ✓ Parishes can now use liturgical ministers - **readers, servers, etc.**
- ✓ **Procession of Gifts** may take place as directed by our Priest.
- ✓ The **Sign of Peace** remains contactless except between those residing in the same household.
- ✓ The distribution of **Communion** during Mass continues to present a risk. Please maintain a single line. In general, two (2) ministers (including the Priest) are adequate to distribute the Lord's Body.
  - The **Communion host** can be received in the hand, and on the tongue with care. Since the latter is deemed high risk, please proceed to the Priest only and at the end of the line.
  - The **Precious Blood** is restricted to Priests only.
- ✓ The **collection plate** has resumed during Mass. Thank you for your continued support.
  - First Collection supports all our Diocesan Priests.
  - Second Collection supports our parish operating costs.
- ✓ **Exit** whilst maintaining physical distancing.

## Parish Office

When visiting the Parish Office:

- ✓ For your safety, use the footpath and **do not** walk through the garden.
- ✓ All on-site visitors are required to sign-in.
- ✓ NSW Health still recommends physical distancing be maintained if entering a building.
- ✓ Please use hand sanitizer. Face masks are available if needed.

Please do not visit if you are unwell. We can assist you by post, phone, or email during normal office hours.

## Sacraments

### Anointing of the Sick

Masses with the Anointing of the Sick is available. See Fr Gerard 1514 The Anointing of the Sick "is not a sacrament for those only who are at the point of death. Hence, as soon as anyone of the faithful begins to be in danger of death from sickness or old age, the fitting time for him to receive this sacrament has certainly already arrived."

From the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

### Baptism

The Sacrament of Baptism can be celebrated: however, in the current circumstances Baptism can only be celebrated by the pouring of water and not by immersion. Baptism enquiries may be made via the Presbytery or Parish Office.

**Baptism Preparation:** The program is held every first Saturday of the month, except January, at 11:15AM in the Parish Hall at Belmont. Enrolment forms are available at each church or from the Parish Office. Our next meeting is on Saturday 4 May 2024. Bookings are essential.

### Funerals

To organize a funeral please contact the Funeral Directors who will then contact the Parish Priest.

### Columbarium

For an information contact the Parish Office.

### Marriage

For all wedding enquiries or bookings, contact Fr Gerard.

### Penance

The celebration of the Sacrament of Penance is available.

### Penance Times:

- Belmont: Saturday morning after Mass
- Swansea: Saturday evening before Mass

## Prayer Requests

### Please pray for

Sick: Therese Smith, Geoff Brown, John and Joan Swift, Baby Carter McGie, Elaine Toohey.

(Once the person is no longer in need of prayer, would you kindly inform the Parish Office)



### Recently Deceased:

### Anniversaries:

*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*

Mass Intentions for publication may be submitted on an envelope on the collection plate, or to the Parish Office by email, or by phone; by 9:00AM Wednesday each week ahead. Envelopes are available at the church entrance. Please write details clearly to avoid errors. A reminder that you need the permission of the person, or their family, to enable us to publish names.

## Intentions

### Pope Francis' Prayer

You are invited to answer the Holy Father's request and to join with many people worldwide in praying for this intention each month. <https://www.popesprayer.va/>

### APRIL'S INTENTION IS FOR THE ROLE OF WOMEN

We pray that the dignity and immense value of women be recognised in every culture, and for the end of discrimination that they experience in different parts of the world.

## Safeguarding in Our Parish

### Our Children and Vulnerable Adults

The Parish of Jesus, the Good Shepherd is committed to the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults. Information brochures are available at the entrance to the Church. Our **Parish Promoters of Safeguarding** are all the members of the Parish Pastoral Council.

## Reflection

by Richard Leonard

Until I spent time on a vineyard ten years ago, I always heard the parable of the vinedresser as a tough, 'shape up or ship out' message. I always imagined God as the vinedresser having a field day lopping and cutting my dead branches, trimming my unproductive stems and uprooting all the rot that undermines my fruitfulness. It always felt like a violent activity.



It was a pleasant surprise then, to actually see a vinedresser in action. Far from an act of violence, the care paid by the dresser to each stem is extraordinary. He or she carefully inspects the branch, delicately cutting only the smallest amount so that the vine will be healthier and more productive. A good vinedresser pores over the vines and from experience knows that to cut too much or too little will render the vine without its distinctive character. Every cut is measured and aimed to prune back only the diseased branch, so as to bring about greater growth for the whole vine and a bigger yield for the vineyard. The vinedresser is not violent with the vine, but extremely tender. The first hearers of today's Gospel would have known that this metaphor is anything but a 'shape up or ship out' message.

This parable is a profound insight into the Christian life. We can claim to belong to the Christian family all we like. We can come to Mass every Sunday. But if the fruit we produce is bitter and poisonous, if we are unforgiving, unjust and uncaring, we cannot claim to be on the vine of Christ's love. And if that's the case we are in desperate need of the gentle hand of the vinedresser, who only wants to see us bring forth the yield we are capable of achieving.

Rev Billy Graham once said, 'Being a member of the Church no more makes you a Christian than living in a garage makes you a car.' That's the point of today's Gospel: God will not judge us by what we say or the public face of goodness we can turn on, we will be judged by our acts of love in and through our kindness and compassion.

This metaphor also reminds us that we are connected to each other. There are moments in our life of faith when we hear or see other Christians saying or doing things we cannot countenance. We can try to disown them by retreating into our denomination, but we are all connected in Christ's vineyard. We need the courage to tell them the truth as we see it, and charitably point out the problems we have with what they think is right. And we need the humility to listen when they challenge us.

It's even harder when the diseased part of the vine is in our own Catholic section of the vineyard. Our first instinct can be to lop off the branch, just to get rid of it. But as any vinedresser knows this is the last resort. Whether we find it easy or not, Christ calls us to limited surgical interventions over amputations every time. This is tough love. Even though there are people within our community who have committed terrible crimes and betrayed our trust, the Gospel calls us to hold on to them until it's clear that no matter what intervention we make, they are dying on Christ's vine already. And even then, we hope and pray that our action towards them might see a new growth within them which could be the beginning of a possible grafting back on to us in the future. In the face of the world's 'shape up or ship out' principle, today's Gospel challenges us to hang in there with each other, in season and out of season, because as the old folk hymn sings, 'They'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love. Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.' © Richard Leonard SJ

If you have any concerns for a child or vulnerable adult, contact the Office of Safeguarding via P 02 4979 1390 or E [childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au).

### For further information visit:

Website: [www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au](http://www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au)

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

Complaints: <https://officeofsafeguarding.org.au/making-a-complaint/>

## Parish News

### The Holy Rosary



During the month of May we honour the Blessed Virgin Mary. **Copies of 'The Holy Rosary' leaflets are available** from the Church entrance or Office.

### Welcome

We welcome new parishioners and visitors. We invite you to pick up our 'New to the Parish?' flyer.

### Live Stream

Our Parish Mass continues to be livestreamed. This means the Mass is recorded and available via [Facebook](#).

### Thinking of becoming Catholic?

See Fr Gerard or email [Fr Gerard](mailto:Fr.Gerard@diocese.org.au).

### Bulletin Notices

All items for the parish bulletin need to be received at the Parish Office by 9:00AM Wednesday.

### Morning Tea

Thank you to everyone who joined in a cuppa after Mass last Sunday. Our next morning tea at Belmont will be first one will be held on Sunday 19 May 2024 after 9:00AM Mass. Enquiries: Jan M 0438 252 657.

### Volunteer Needed

We need one or more volunteers to assist with the cleaning of St Pius X Church Windale on a weekly basis, usually on a Friday at 10:00AM. Contact the office if you are interested.

### Parish Insurance

This year our parish insurance is \$34,000 and full payment is due by or on 30 June 2024. The parish has applied for a "one-off" assistance from the Diocese and is waiting for a response.

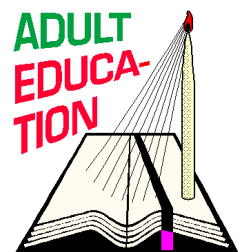
### Project Compassion – CLOSED

Project Compassion boxes is now closed. Please ensure your box is returned **no later than Wednesday 1 May 2024**. Kindly send any direct debits directly to Caritas Australia via <https://www.caritas.org.au/project-compassion/donate/> or use BSB 062 217 and Account number 1047 1471 Agent 421713.

## Parish Groups and Committees

### Breaking Open the Word

**Commences on Thursday 2 May 2024.....**



You are welcome to join us on the first Thursday of the month after the 8:30AM Mass to reflect on the Sunday Gospel of the week. Study material is provided and it's free. Rose McAllister, Manager of Formation and Education for the Diocese, will lead us in this reflection. Morning tea will follow. No RSVP needed. Enquiries: Jan M 0438 252 657.

### Choir

A choir has been formed to sing Latin Gregorian chant occasionally at the 9:00AM Mass at St Francis Xavier's Church, Belmont. If anyone has an interest in joining the choir, contact Andrew on M 0405 772 779.

### Family Group Movement

Enquiries John and Pauline via P 02 4946 7460 or E [mcqraths\\_12@hotmail.com](mailto:mcqraths_12@hotmail.com).

### Friendship Group

The next Friendship Group for singles lunch will be held on Sunday 5 May at 12:00PM at the Orana Hotel Pacific Highway Blacksmiths. RSVP before Thursday 2 May by contacting Mary on M 0408 498 898. Newcomers are welcome.

### Social Justice Committee

Our Social Justice Committee is calling for new members. We meet three to four times a year. If you'd like to join or learn more, contact Paul via M 0418 240 604.

### St Patricks Craft Group

Our parish craft group gathers weekly in the Swansea Church Hall at 9:30AM on Mondays, except January. All welcome. Enquiries Gay M 0419 211 573.

### St Vincent de Paul

To join one of our Parish Conferences, contact one of the presidents.

Belmont	Paul	0418 240 604
Swansea	Anne	0439 814 874
Windale	Brian	0407 125 338

## Diocesan News

### Diocesan Library

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle Library is open for patrons at 12 Tudor Street Newcastle West. Opening hours:

Mondays & Fridays	– 10:00AM to 6:00PM
Saturdays	10:00AM to 2:00PM

### Diocesan Resource Centre

Standing on the Shoulders: The Official Opening of the Diocesan Resource Centre and Library and the 2024 TWEC Dinner. It is with much excitement that you are invited to join us for the official opening of the Diocesan Resource Centre and Library. The Library, which stands on the site of the original Newcastle Central Catholic Library, offers our community access to resources relating to Religious Education, Scripture, Theology, Liturgy and more. Following on from the official opening, the celebration continues with the reimagining of the TWEC dinner with guest speaker Kelly Paget, Chancellor and Director of Mission at the Diocese of Broken Bay. Kelly was amongst five Australians chosen personally by the Holy Father to participate in the General Synod of Bishops in Rome.

Date: Friday 31 May 2024.

Library Opening: 4:30PM - Free entry - All welcome

Dinner & Speaker: 5:30PM \$40 pp includes buffet meal and guest speaker presentation.

Dinner Registration link: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/twec-dinner-library-opening-tickets-872278206597>

### Christian Meditation

John and Anne Gray will lead this event, opening a space for inner silence, gratitude, love and divine beauty. The duo will lead us in Imaginative Contemplation and share the aims of the Worldwide Prayer Network. All are welcome. Morning tea provided. Bring your lunch. \$10 donations would be appreciated.

When: Saturday 25 May, 9:30AM – 2:30PM

Where: St James School Hall (Vista Parade, Kotara) – parking available on Church grounds or street.

RSVP: [annecuskelly@hotmail.com](mailto:annecuskelly@hotmail.com) or M 0407 436 808

## Other News

### Missionaries of God's Love Sisters: Banquet – Pentecost Intensive at Carmel House

Discover the depths of God's love through our Banquet Intensive as we accept the invitation to radical intimacy with the Trinity. Feast on God's powerful love for you, open up to the gifts of the Spirit, savour times of powerful input, prayer, and practical workshops, and find the charismatic generosity of God unleashed in your own life of mission and discipleship.

Friday 17 May (6:00PM) to Wednesday 2 May (2:00PM) at Carmel House (345 St Andrews Road Varroville NSW)

We would love financial means to never be a barrier to someone attending our retreats. Contact us about sponsorship options. For more info, visit [www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1155206](http://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1155206)



## Fifth Sunday of Easter Year B

### Entrance Antiphon

Cf Psalm 97:1-2

O sing a new song to the Lord,  
for he has worked wonders;  
in the sight of the nations  
he has shown his deliverance, alleluia.

### First Reading

Acts of the Apostles 9:26-31

#### A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

*He explained how the Lord appeared to Saul and spoke to him on his journey.*

When Saul got to Jerusalem he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him: they could not believe he was really a disciple. Barnabas, however, took charge of him, introduced him to the apostles, and explained how the Lord had appeared to Saul and spoken to him on his journey, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. Saul now started to go round with them in Jerusalem, preaching fearlessly in the name of the Lord. But after he had spoken to the Hellenists, and argued with them, they became determined to kill him. When the brothers knew, they took him to Caesarea, and sent him off from there to Tarsus.

The churches throughout Judaea, Galilee and Samaria were now left in peace, building themselves up, living in the fear of the Lord, and filled with the consolation of the Holy Spirit.

The Word of the Lord.

### Responsorial Psalm

Ps 21:26-28. 30-32. R. v.26

#### (R.) I will praise you, Lord, in the assembly of your people.

1. My vows I will pay before *those who fear him*.  
The poor shall eat and shall *have their fill*.  
They shall praise the Lord, *those who seek him*.  
May their hearts live for *ever and ever!*

2. All the earth shall remember and return *to the Lord*,  
all families of the nations *worship before him*.  
They shall worship him, all the mighty *of the earth*;  
before him shall bow all who go down *to the dust*.

3. And my soul shall live for him, my children *serve him*.  
They shall tell of the Lord to generations *yet to come*,  
declare his faithfulness to peoples *yet unborn*:  
'These things the *Lord has done*.'

### Second Reading

1 John 3:18-24

#### A reading from the first letter of St John

*His commandments are these: that we believe and that we love one another.*

My children,  
our love is not to be just words or mere talk,  
but something real and active;  
only by this can we be certain  
that we are the children of the truth  
and be able to quieten our conscience in his presence,  
whatever accusations it may raise against us,  
because God is greater than our conscience and he knows  
everything.  
My dear people,  
if we cannot be condemned by our own conscience,

we need not be afraid in God's presence,  
and whatever we ask him,  
we shall receive,  
because we keep his commandments  
and live the kind of life that he wants.  
His commandments are these:  
that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ  
and that we love one another  
as he told us to.  
Whoever keeps his commandments  
lives in God and God lives in him.  
We know that he lives in us  
by the Spirit that he has given us.

The Word of the Lord.

### Gospel Acclamation

John 15:4-5

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.  
Live in me and let me live in you, *says the Lord*;  
my branches *bear much fruit*.  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

### Gospel

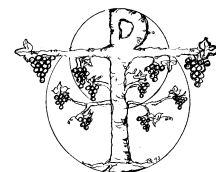
John 15:1-8

#### A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

*All who live in me, and I in them, bear much fruit.*

Jesus said to his disciples:

'I am the true vine,  
and my Father is the vinedresser.  
Every branch in me that bears no fruit  
he cuts away,  
and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes  
to make it bear even more.  
You are pruned already,  
by means of the word that I have spoken to you.  
Make your home in me, as I make mine in you.  
As a branch cannot bear fruit all by itself,  
but must remain part of the vine,  
neither can you unless you remain in me.  
I am the vine,  
you are the branches.  
Whoever remains in me, with me in him,  
bears fruit in plenty;  
for cut off from me you can do nothing.  
Anyone who does not remain in me  
is like a branch that has been thrown away  
– he withers;  
these branches are collected and thrown on the fire,  
and they are burnt.  
If you remain in me  
and my words remain in you,  
you may ask what you will  
and you shall get it.  
It is to the glory of my Father that you  
should bear much fruit,  
and then you will be my disciples.'



The Gospel of the Lord.

### Communion Antiphon

Cf John 15:1,5

I am the true vine and you are the branches, says the Lord.  
Whoever remains in me, and I in him, bears fruit in plenty, alleluia.

