



JESUS, THE GOOD SHEPHERD PARISH

~ East Lake Macquarie ~

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

· FIFTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME · YEAR A · 12 JULY 2026 ·

Parish Presbytery

Parish Priest Fr Gerard Mackie PP
Postal Address PO Box 277
BELMONT NSW 2280
Phone 02 4945 1244
Email gem5403@gmail.com

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
Phone 02 4945 4402
Email elmparish@mn.catholic.org.au
Facebook 
Webpage <https://mn.catholic.org.au/parish/jesus-the-good-shepherd-east-lake-macquarie/>

Columbarium

Office Hours

Monday 8:30AM to 1:30PM
Wednesday **OFFICE CLOSED**
Thursday 8:30AM to 1:30PM

Schools

St Francis Xavier's Catholic Primary School Belmont

Principal Mrs Freda Pascoe
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
Website 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
Website 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
Website 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 02 4979 1200
Email chancery@mn.catholic.org.au
Website www.mn.catholic.org.au

Liturgical Celebrations

Weekday Mass Times

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 Mass Times

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

Live Stream

Our Mass continues to be livestreamed daily and is available via Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Catholic-Church/Jesus-the-Good-Shepherd-Parish-East-Lake-Macquarie-105542444421379/>.

Feast Days

13 Jul Saint Henry
14 Jul Saint Camillus de Lellis, Priest
15 Jul Saint Bonaventure, Bishop and Doctor of the Church
16 Jul Our Lady of Mount Carmel

Morning Prayer

Morning Prayer is prayed 15 minutes before our weekday Mass.

Rosary

We invite everyone to pray the Rosary daily after the 8:30AM weekday Mass from Monday to Saturday. Rosary is also prayed on Saturdays prior to the Vigil Mass at St Patrick's Swansea, commencing forty (40) minutes before the Mass, starting 5:20PM Summer and 4:20PM Winter.

Votive Candles

Burning votive candles is a common sight in Catholic churches. The light signifies our prayer offered in faith entering the light of God. All are welcome to light candles. Gold coin donations. All proceeds support the Parish.

Mass at Jesus the Good Shepherd

The following information is to assist parishioners and visitors:

- ✓ **Face masks** are available at the church entrance.
- ✓ **Hand sanitiser** is available at the church entrance.
- ✓ **Holy Water** is available and changed regularly.
- ✓ Please **take your bulletin home** with you after Mass.
- ✓ A selection of **Children's worksheets** is available for children.
- ✓ The **Sign of Peace** remains contactless except between those residing in the same household.
- ✓ The **Communion Host** can be received in the hand, or on the tongue with care. For the latter, proceed to the Priest only and at the end of the line.
- ✓ The **Precious Blood** can be received. A person with symptoms of cold, flu, COVID, or other viruses should not share the chalice with others. Intinction is only for priests.
- ✓ There are two (2) **collection plates** during Mass. Thank you for your continued support. The following option is available:
 - The **First Collection** supports Diocesan **Clergy**:
Account name: ELM Parish
Reference: <your name>
BSB: 066-739 Account Number: 100005583
 - The **Second Collection** supports our **Parish**:
Account Name: ELM Parish
Reference: <your name>
BSB: 066-739 Account Number: 100005586



Parish Office

When visiting the Parish Office, use the footpath and **not** walk across the garden. On-site visitors are all required to sign-in. Hand sanitizer and face masks are available if needed.

Sacraments

Thinking of becoming Catholic?

See Fr Gerard or email gem5403@gmail.com.

Anointing of the Sick

Anointing of the Sick is available. See Fr Gerard

Baptism

The Sacrament of Baptism enquiries are made via the 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 session is on **Saturday 1 August 2026**. 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
(Be seated and wait in the pew in front of the organ)
Swansea: Saturday evening before Mass
(Be seated in pew near confessional back of the church)

Children's Liturgy

JOIN US at St Francis Xavier Church Belmont for Children's Liturgy of the Word during 9:00AM Mass on the **third Sunday of every month**.

This child-centred liturgy offers a friendly, safe, and engaging space (in the church hall) where children can hear and reflect on the Gospel in a way that speaks to their hearts.

All children are warmly invited to participate – come and share in the joy of faith made simple and meaningful for our youngest parishioners.

Stay after Mass for a relaxed morning tea – a great chance to connect with fellow families and parishioners!

Prayer Requests

Please pray for

Sick: Marlene O'Neill, Laura Langan, Geoff Brown.

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

Recently Deceased:

Anniversaries: Silvia Unicomb, Margaret Duggan.

Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. ✠ May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, though the mercy of God, 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.

Pope's Prayer Intentions

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/>

July's Intention is For respect for human life.

Let us pray for the respect and protection of human life in all its stages, recognizing it as a gift from God.

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 Greg Sunter



The teaching of Jesus is grounded firmly in the Jewish world of the 1st Century. For most of his listeners, that world was an agricultural one and so the stories Jesus told were about the everyday realities of peoples' lives. He told stories about vineyards, wheat fields, building houses, planting seeds and reaping harvests. The imagery he used was drawn from the lived experience of those he taught. Jesus used a style of storytelling that was popular at the time: parable. A parable is a story with a moral or a lesson. A parable usually involves an extended metaphor and, at its heart, is teaching the listener about how to live or how to behave.

Another feature of parables is that they can be understood at different levels. At one level, there is the literal meaning of a parable – what it says is what it is about. In today's gospel, the parable of the sower can be read or heard as a literal story about sowing seed and the lesson one might take from it is to be careful where you throw the seed when sowing. At another level, parables have a metaphoric meaning. In this instance, Jesus actually explains the symbolism of the parable to his disciples. There is a further, interpretive level of a parable where a modern reader asks, 'What has that story got to say to me here and now?' In his conversation with the disciples, Jesus makes clear that only some people are open to understanding the depth of the message contained within his parables. Some people will only ever hear the story and never hear the message. Mind you, he still has to explain the parable to the disciples! He has just chastised those who fail to understand and yet walks the disciples through the parable step by step!

Historical Context – Matthew's community

The gospel of Matthew is written at a time and particular context in which the community audience were feeling the effects of having been ostracised from the Jewish community. They were confounded by the fact that other Jews could not accept the reality of the Jesus message as they had. This parable, and the accompanying conversation with the disciples in which they are blessed for their understanding, would have been a comfort for the Matthew community. Although they were frustrated, they were being told through this story that not everyone is ready to hear the message that they had heard and accepted.

Scriptural context – A Parable Chapter

The gospel of Matthew is nothing if not a well-crafted and highly structured piece of writing. Throughout the gospel there are five major 'discourses' or teachings. Chapter 13, which consists entirely of a collection of parables, is the central discourse of the five. It is the pivotal point of the entire gospel. The nature of the parables indicates that the message of Jesus has not been universally accepted and the parables present metaphors about the consequences for those who do and do not accept the message of Jesus about the reign of God.

Living the Gospel – Scatter that seed!

The teaching of the parable of the sower is as true for us today as it was in its original context. The word of the kingdom continues to fall on people who are at various stages of readiness to receive it. What Jesus suggests to his disciples – and to us – is that the 'good soil' can't always be predicted. Jesus doesn't tell his disciples to only sow the word in people who are receptive. Rather, he wants them – and us – to scatter the word everywhere and to rejoice when it does find good soil and yields a rich harvest. © Greg Sunter

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.

For further information visit:

Website: www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au

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

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



Parish News

Welcome

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

Bulletin Notices, Flyers and Posters

To avoid disappointment, all items for the parish bulletin need to be received at the Parish Office by 9:00AM on Wednesdays. A respectful reminder that ALL items for the noticeboards - posters, flyers, newsletters, etc, - need to be submitted via the office for distribution.

Children's Worksheets

Each weekend there is a new Children's Liturgy worksheet available at the Church entrance, and some old ones too.

Social Justice Collection Report 2025-2026

A total of \$9,500.20 has been raised by the parish financial year 2025-2026 supporting Catholic Mission and St Vincent de Paul. A weekly breakdown. The following has been forwarded collected from last quarter:

Don Bosco Industrial Training Skills Centre, Mongolia	\$863.65
Balgo Project Western Australia	\$863.65
Regional St Vincent de Paul	\$431.82

Parish Groups

Catholic Grandparents Association

Jesus, The Good Shepherd Parish is now affiliated with the Catholic Grandparents Association (CGA). Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles, Godparents, and all Catholic seniors, if you would like to join, contact Paul C M 0422 252 453. The purpose of the group is to pass on the faith. For more information go to www.catholicgrandparentsassociation.org.

Children's Liturgy of the Word

Our next Children's Liturgy of the Word will be celebrated, **Sunday 19 July 2026**, during the 9:00AM Mass, and every third Sunday of every month at Belmont Church. A Sign-In Book is available before Mass. See page 2.

Choir

A choir has been formed to sing Latin Gregorian chant occasionally at the 9:00AM Mass at St Francis Xavier's Church, Belmont. All welcome. Enquiries: Andrew on M 0405 772 779.

Cuppa and a Chat - Parish Cuppa Tea

Belmont - JOIN IN a morning tea at Belmont Hall after the 9:00AM Mass normally on the third Sunday of every month. All are welcome. Our next one is **Sunday 19 July**. Enquiries: Joice. **Windale** - JOIN IN a morning tea at Windale Hall after 7:30AM Mass normally on the fourth Sunday of the month. All are welcome. Our next one will be **Sunday, 26 July 2026**. Enquiries: Sr Maria.

Family Group Movement

The Passionist Family Groups provide an extended family for all who wish to belong. Everyone is welcome to join. Enquiries: John and Pauline via M 0418 482 568 or E mcgraths_12@hotmail.com.

Friendship Group

The next Friendship Group for Singles lunch will be held on Sunday 2 August @ 12:00PM at Swansea Workers Club, Rawson Street Swansea. RSVP before 5:00PM, Thursday 30/7/2026 by ringing Mary on 0408 498 898. New members always welcome.

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 enquire or join one of our Parish Conferences, contact one of the presidents. Belmont - John D M 0424 695 721, Swansea - Jenny P M 0439 814 874, Windale - Paul C M 0418 240 604.

Social Justice Committee

The Social Justice Committee has placed donation boxes at the entrances to our churches. Please donate generously as funds raised goes towards supporting our three (3) projects: international, national and regional.

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 Mary R M 0402 498 898.

Diocesan News

The Synodal Way: A journey into what the Global Synod Now Asks of Us

The Synod on Synodality has been one of the most significant events in the life of the Catholic Church since Vatican II. For the first time, lay women and men joined bishops in the Synod Assembly with equal voting rights. Shortly afterwards, Pope Francis adopted the Final Document as part of the ordinary teaching of the Church.

What does this mean for us and for the future of our Diocese? Join us as we explore the key themes of the Final Document, the implementation phase now underway, and opportunities to become involved in local Synodal Teams. Please bring a plate to share and register your attendance.

CHARLESTOWN Pastoral Centre: Wed 15 July 6:00PM-8:00PM

Register: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/the-synodal-way-tickets-1991962613800?aff=oddttdtcreator>

WARNER'S BAY Church Hall Mon 20 July 6:30PM -8:30PM

Register: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/the-synodal-way-tickets-1991965186495?aff=oddttdtcreator>

Other

Seafarers Sunday 2026

Catholic Seafarers Sunday (or Sea Sunday) in 2026 is observed on Sunday, 12 July. The global Catholic maritime agency Stella Maris leads this observance under the official 2026 theme: "Harbours of Hope: The Church Alongside Seafarers".

Locally, donations of goods needed for our Seafarers Care Packs of toiletries, warm clothing, writing materials and cards/puzzles. For more info contact our Catholic Port Chaplain, Mark Spencer via E mark.spencer1@mn.catholic.org.au or for more information go to <https://stellamarisaustralia.org/>

Monetary donations can be made to the following account:

BSB:062 784 Account Number:1000 12583

Account Name:The Apostleship of the Sea

Eucharist28

The International Eucharistic Congress ('Eucharist28') is coming to Sydney in 2028! Eucharist28's theme, 'This is My Body, Given For You', invites us to reflect on Christ's words as he instituted the Eucharistic Sacrifice. At each Mass, the priest repeats Jesus' words from the Last Supper, and the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ. As we receive the Eucharist, we are called to carry His presence into our homes, workplaces, schools, parishes and communities. We're invited to allow Christ's presence to transform us as we share in the breaking of the bread. The journey begins now. Go to <https://eucharist28.org/resources> for catechetical material or website <https://eucharist28.org/> for more.

About Aid to the Church in Need (ACN)

Aid to the Church in Need is the only international Catholic charity dedicated to the service of suffering Christians wherever they are persecuted, oppressed or in pastoral need. Founded in 1947, ACN is a pontifical foundation and provides vital aid for pastoral projects, religious education, and emergency relief in areas affected by conflict and poverty. For many years we have partnered with parishes to share about these projects. ACN operates solely on benefactor donations, with no funding from Church or State. Learn more on our website: www.aidtochurch.org

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time Yr A

Entrance Antiphon

Cf Psalm 16:15

As for me, in justice I shall behold your face;
I shall be filled with the vision of your glory.

First Reading

Isaiah 55:10-11

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

The rain makes the earth fruitful.

Thus says the Lord: 'As the rain and the snow come down from the heavens and do not return without watering the earth, making it yield and giving growth to provide seed for the sower and bread for the eating, so the word that goes from my mouth does not return to me empty, without carrying out my will and succeeding in what it was sent to do.'

The Word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 64:10-14 R. Lk 8:8

(R.) The seed that falls on good ground will yield a fruitful harvest.

1. You care for the earth, give it water,
you fill it with riches.

Your river in heaven brims over
to provide its grain.

2. And thus you provide for the earth;
you drench its furrows,
you level it, soften it with showers,
you bless its growth.

3. You crown the year with your goodness.
Abundance flows in your steps,
in the pastures of the wilderness it flows.

4. The hills are girded with joy,
the meadows covered with flocks,
the valleys are decked with wheat.
They shout for joy, yes, they sing.

Second Reading

Romans 8:18-23

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

All creation is waiting for the revelation of the children of God.

I think that what we suffer in this life can never be compared to the glory, as yet unrevealed, which is waiting for us. The whole creation is eagerly waiting for God to reveal his sons. It was not for any fault on the part of creation that it was made unable to attain its purpose, it was made so by God; but creation still retains the hope of being freed, like us, from its slavery to decadence, to enjoy the same freedom and glory as the children of God. From the beginning till now the entire creation, as we know, has been groaning in one great act of giving birth; and not only creation, but all of us who possess the first-fruits of the Spirit, we too groan inwardly as we wait for our bodies to be set free.

The Word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

The seed is the word of God, Christ is the sower;
all who come to him will live for ever.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.



Gospel

Matthew 13:1-23

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

A sower went out to sow.

Jesus left the house and sat by the lakeside, but such crowds gathered round him that he got into a boat and sat there. The people all stood on the beach, and he told them many things in parables.

He said, 'Imagine a sower going out to sow. As he sowed, some seeds fell on the edge of the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Others fell on patches of rock where they found little soil and sprang up straight away, because there was no depth of earth; but as soon as the sun came up they were scorched and, not having any roots, they withered away. Others fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Others fell on rich soil and produced their crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Listen, anyone who has ears!'

Then the disciples went up to him and asked, 'Why do you talk to them in parables?' 'Because' he replied 'the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven are revealed to you, but they are not revealed to them. For anyone who has will be given more, and he will have more than enough; but from anyone who has not, even what he has will be taken away. The reason I talk to them in parables is that they look without seeing and listen without hearing or understanding. So in their case this prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled:

You will listen and listen again, but not understand,
see and see again, but not perceive.

For the heart of this nation has grown coarse,
their ears are dull of hearing,
and they have shut their eyes,
for fear they should see with their eyes,
hear with their ears,
understand with their heart,
and be converted
and be healed by me.

'But happy are your eyes because they see, your ears because they hear! I tell you solemnly, many prophets and holy men longed to see what you see, and never saw it; to hear what you hear, and never heard it.

'You, therefore, are to hear the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom without understanding, the evil one comes and carries off what was sown in his heart: this is the man who received the seed on the edge of the path. The one who received it on patches of rock is the man who hears the word and welcomes it at once with joy. But he has no root in him, he does not last; let some trial come, or some persecution on account of the word, and he falls away at once. The one who received the seed in thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this world and the lure of riches choke the word and so he produces nothing. And the one who received the seed in rich soil is the man who hears the word and understands it; he is the one who yields a harvest and produces now a hundredfold, now sixty, now thirty.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Communion Antiphon

Cf Psalm 83:4-5

The sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for her young:
by your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.
Blessed are they who dwell in your house, for ever singing your praise.

Or John 6:57

Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood
remains in me and I in him, says the Lord.

