



JESUS, THE GOOD SHEPHERD PARISH

~ East Lake Macquarie ~

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

• TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR A • 30 AUGUST 2026 •

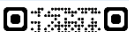
Parish Presbytery

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  [Jesus the Good Shepherd Parish-East Lake Macquarie](https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Catholic-Church/Jesus-the-Good-Shepherd-Parish-East-Lake-Macquarie-10554244421379/)

Webpage  <https://mn.catholic.org.au/parish/jesus-the-good-shepherd-east-lake-macquarie/>

Columbarium All enquiries via Parish Office

Office Hours

Monday 8:30AM to 1:30PM

Wednesday 8:30AM to 1:30PM

Thursday **CLOSED**

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-10554244421379/>.

Feast Days

3 Sept Saint Gregory the Great, Pope and Doctor of the Church

8 Sept The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

9 Sept Saint Peter Claver, Priest

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

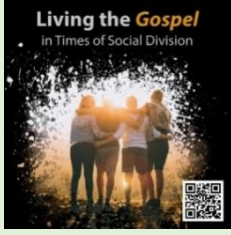


Parish Office

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.

Social Justice Sunday

Living the Gospel in Times of Social Division



The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference has released its 2026 Social Justice Statement, *Living the Gospel in Times of Social Division*.

Each year, the bishops invite us to reflect on issues affecting our communities and to consider how the Gospel calls us to respond. This year's Statement comes at

a time when division, hostility and intolerance are increasingly evident in Australia and around the world.

We have witnessed a disturbing rise in antisemitism and other forms of racism, alongside public debate that can too easily become angry and divisive. While disagreement is part of life, hatred, abuse and violence can never be accepted as its consequence.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we are called to another way.

The Gospel reminds us that every person is created in the image and likeness of God. We do not have to agree with one another on every issue, but we are called to recognise the dignity of every person, to listen with open hearts and to treat one another as neighbours rather than opponents.

This begins by remaining close to Christ in prayer and allowing Him to shape our own hearts. Before we seek to change others, we might first ask what needs to change within ourselves.

The Statement calls us to help build a "culture of encounter": to reach beyond the divisions that separate us, listen to people whose experiences may be different from our own and build relationships founded on respect, compassion and our shared human dignity.

This is something each of us can do through the way we speak to and about others, particularly those with whom we disagree. It is found when we listen rather than judge, reach out to someone who feels isolated or unwelcome and stand beside those who experience discrimination.

You can access the full statement at: <https://www.catholic.au/s/article/Social-Justice-Statements>

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: Dalkeith Unicomb.

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/>

August's Intention For Evangelization in the City.

Let us pray that in large cities often marked by anonymity and loneliness we find new ways to proclaim the Gospel, discovering creative paths to build community.

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



This week's gospel is the first of three predictions of Jesus' death and resurrection in Matthew's gospel (see also Mark and Luke). Despite Peter's confession of faith that immediately precedes this passage (see last week's gospel), the disciples still do not have a very solid understanding of Jesus' purpose. They may regard him as the Messiah, but still do not fully understand what that means. In this passage, Jesus is beginning to prepare them for the events of the passion – his death and resurrection. He is trying to lead them to a greater understanding of his mission and message. But Peter abruptly 'rebukes' Jesus and tells him not to speak like that. One can almost hear Peter saying, 'Look, Jesus, you've got a good thing going here, don't spoil it by talking about dying!' However, Jesus responds to Peter very sharply, suggesting that his lack of understanding is inspired by evil and reflects human thought, not divine wisdom.

The passage then leads in to a description of the challenge of discipleship. To be a follower of Jesus means to 'deny' oneself, take up one's cross and follow Jesus. In the context of this passage, to 'deny' oneself means to not be concerned about 'I' but to be concerned about 'You' – to put others before self. To be a follower of Jesus means to be selfless, not self-centred. In the ultimate example of this, Jesus tells his disciples that whoever wishes to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for Jesus' sake will find it. To 'save' your life is to hold back from giving yourself fully to the message of Jesus – to be 'half-hearted' in your faith. But to 'lose' yourself in the message of Jesus is to fully give yourself over to living the reign of God and through 'losing' yourself in this way, Jesus tells us, is how to truly find life.

Historical Context. Whoever loses his life for my sake...

At the time of the writing of Matthew's gospel (around 75-80 CE), Christians were being persecuted and put to death for their beliefs. They were literally giving up their lives for their faith. These persecuted Christians saw Jesus' triumph over death as a sign of great hope and trust in the future for themselves. Jesus' words in the gospel – 'whoever loses his life for my sake will find it' – would give hope to those under persecution that ultimately they too would triumph and that the deaths of their friends were not in vain.

Scriptural context. Not quite there...

This passage immediately follows the passage of last week's gospel which featured Peter's confession of faith – his inspired revelation that 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God.' The reader might think, 'Aha, the disciples have finally got it!' But in a very clever piece of writing, the author of Matthew's gospel follows this revelation of faith immediately with an example of the lack of clarity that the disciples, including Peter, still possess. This happens throughout the gospels. Whenever the disciples have a bit of an insight, they are almost immediately shown to only have a partial understanding of the truth. The full revelation of Jesus' mission and ministry is not easy to grasp and even the disciples were not quite there until they had seen the 'full story' played out before and within them.

Living the Gospel. Have you got what it takes?

For some people, to be a Christian is a 'soft option' – they see being Christian as being a bit 'fluffy'. This week's gospel is a reminder of the real challenge of being a Christian. Jesus reminds us that to be one of his followers we must be prepared to pick up our cross – whatever our particular cross might be – and still follow his example. To be a Christian means that we don't fall in a heap when difficulty comes our way; we take up the burden – our cross – and continue to look forward with hope. To live like Jesus is no easy option.

© 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.

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM – FIRST PENANCE

First Penance (Confession) for those children who completed their first Penance course last year, the celebration of their first confession will take place at St Francis Xavier Church, Belmont on either Saturday 12 Sept or 19 Sept at 9:10AM. Please make sure that your child knows the Short Act of Contrition. Please email Fr Gerard gem5403@gmail.com and in the 'subject' line type FIRST CONFESSION, and in the body of the email just put your child's full name, and the date they will attend.

Child Protection Week

Protecting children, and the vulnerable, is everyone's business. Soon you will see displays in our churches advertising National Child Protection Week, 6 to 12 September 2026. Near the displays there will be small paper hearts. We invite all our parishioners to write their first name on a heart and add it to the display, in an act of commitment of ensuring the safety of children, and the vulnerable, in our parish and wider community.

Parish Social Event - Save the Date

Please save the date, Tuesday 3 November, Melbourne Cup Day, for our next parish get together. More information soon.

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:

Belmont - every third Sunday of the month during the 9:00AM Mass.

Swansea - every week during the Saturday 5:00PM Mass.

To assist facilitators a 'Sign-In' Book is available before Mass.

Cuppa and a Chat - Parish Cuppa Tea

Everyone is invited to stay and join in our parish morning tea:

Belmont - every third Sunday of the month after the 9:00AM Mass. Our next one is on Sunday, 20 September. Enquiries: Joice.

Windale - every fourth Sunday of the month after the 7:30AM Mass. Our next one is Sunday, 27 September 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 13 September @ 12:00PM at Valentine Bowling Club 17A Valentine Crescent Valentine. RSVP before 5:00PM, Thursday 10/8/2026 by ringing Mary on 0408 498 898. New members always welcome.

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.

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.

Diocesan News

Novena to Our Lady of Good Health

Please see the notice board or flyer (emailed) with information about the Novena to Our Lady of Good Health. A list of dates and times are included on the flyer. All are invited.

When: Commencing on Saturday 29 August and concluding on Tuesday 8 September 2026.

Where: St Brigid's Church, Raymond Terrace

Social Justice Sunday

Living the Gospel in Times of Social Division

Today is Social Justice Sunday. Bishop Michael Kennedy reflects on the latest Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Social Justice Statement and the Gospel call to be people of encounter and reconciliation. Scan the QR code or visit <https://mn.catholic.org.au/news/living-the-gospel-in-times-of-social-division-a-message-from-bishop-michael-kennedy/>

Hard copies of the Social Justice Statement are available at each church.



SCAN TO
DOWNLOAD
DOCUMENT

World Youth Day 2027 Diocesan Launch

The Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle will provide a pilgrimage to South Korea along with a post-retreat in Japan for young people aged 16-35 from 29 July to 13 August 2027. To learn more, eligible youth and interested parents and carers are invited to join us at the Launch:

When: Tuesday 8 September 2026

Where: Sacred Heart Cathedral Hunter Street Newcastle West
5:30PM: Mass and the Reception of the Relic of WYD Patron Saint Carlo Acutis

6:30PM: Hospitality

7:00PM: WYD27 Launch Event featuring early information about this exciting opportunity.

Enquiries: mission@mn.catholic.org.au

St Carlo Acutis Major Relic Mission

Our Diocese is proud to be hosting the first-class relics of a millennial Saint – Carlo Acutis (8-14 September). During his young life, Carlo created the Eucharistic Miracle Exhibition, which will also accompany the tour. Learn More: <https://mn.catholic.org.au/st-carlo-acutis-relic-mission/>

St Aloysius Girls High School – 60 Year Reunion

Looking for ex-students from the class of 1963-1966. Lunch at West Mayfield from 12:00PM on Wednesday 30 September 2026. Purchase your lunch from the Bistro. It would be great to celebrate with as many old school mates as possible. Respond to Angie on 0414 449 914 or angienphil2@gmail.com or Gail on the school Facebook page.

Other News

World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation

The 2026 World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation takes place on 1 September 2026. Announced by the Vatican News, the theme chosen by Pope Leo XIV is "They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks" (Isaiah 2:4).

Twenty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

Entrance Antiphon

Cf Psalm 85:3,5

Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I cry to you all the day long.

O Lord, you are good and forgiving,
full of mercy to all who call to you.

First Reading

Jeremiah 20:7-9

A reading from the prophet Jeremiah

The word of the Lord God has meant derision for me.

You have seduced me, Lord, and I have let myself be seduced;

you have overpowered me: you were the stronger.

I am a daily laughing-stock,
everybody's butt.

Each time I speak the word, I have to howl
and proclaim: 'Violence and ruin!'

The word of the Lord has meant for me
insult, derision, all day long.

I used to say, I will not think about him,
I will not speak in his name any more.

Then there seemed to be a fire burning in my heart,
imprisoned in my bones.

The effort to restrain it wearied me,
I could not bear it.

The Word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 62:2-6. 8-9. R. v.2

(R.) My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

1. O God, you are my God, for you I long;
for you my soul is thirsting.

My body pinches for you
like a dry, weary land without water.

2. So I gaze on you in the sanctuary
to see your strength and your glory.
For your love is better than life,
my lips will speak your praise.

3. So I will bless you all my life,
in your name I will lift up my hands.
My soul shall be filled as with a banquet,
my mouth shall praise you with joy.

4. For you have been my help;
in the shadow of your wings I rejoice.
My soul clings to you;
your right hand holds me fast.

Second Reading

Romans 12:1-2

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

May you present your bodies as a living sacrifice.

Think of God's mercy, my brothers, and worship him, I beg you, in a way that is worthy of thinking beings, by offering your living bodies as a holy sacrifice, truly pleasing to God. Do not model yourselves on the behaviour of the world around you, but let your behaviour change, modelled by your new mind. This is the only way to discover the will of God and know what is good, what it is that God wants, what is the perfect thing to do.

The Word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation

See Ephesians 1:17-18

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ enlighten the eyes of our heart,
that we might see how great is the hope to which we are called.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

Matthew 16:21-27

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself.

Jesus began to make it clear to his disciples that he was destined to go to Jerusalem and suffer grievously at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, to be put to death and to be raised up on the third day. Then, taking him aside, Peter started to remonstrate with him. 'Heaven preserve you, Lord,' he said. 'This must not happen to you.' But he turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle in my path, because the way you think is not God's way but man's.'

Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me. For anyone who wants to save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake will find it. What, then, will a man gain if he wins the whole world and ruins his life? Or what has a man to offer in exchange for his life?

'For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and, when he does, he will reward each one according to his behaviour.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Communion Antiphon

Psalm 30:20

How great is the goodness, Lord,
that you keep for those who fear you.



Next Weekends Readings

Twenty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading	Ez 33:7-9
Responsorial Psalm	Ps 94:1-2.6-9. R. v.8
Second Reading	Rom 13:8-10
Gospel Acclamation	2 Cor 5:19
Gospel	Mt 18:15-20

