



JESUS, THE GOOD SHEPHERD PARISH

~ East Lake Macquarie ~

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

• TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR A • 20 SEPTEMBER 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 8:30AM to 1:30PM
Thursday **OFFICE 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 **NO MASS**
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

21 Sep: Saint Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist
24 Sep: Our Lady of Mercy
(Patronal Feast Day of Sisters of Mercy)
26 Sep: Saints Cosmas and Damian, Martyrs

Morning Prayer

Morning Prayer is prayed 15 minutes before our weekday Mass.

Rosary

Rosary is prayed daily after the 8:30AM weekday Mass; and on Saturdays prior to the Vigil Mass at St Patrick's Swansea starting 5:20PM Summer and 4:20PM Winter. All are invited to join in.

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, if needed.
- ✓ **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:
 - For an **Authority to Deduct** form contact the Parish Office
 - 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
 - OTHER Parish account **Repairs and Maintenance**:
Account name: R&M ELM Parish Reference: <your name>
BSB: 066-739 Account Number: 100030696



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.

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 3 October 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** and **weekly at St Patrick's Church Swansea Vigil Mass**.

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.

At Belmont 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: Pauline Maher (sister to Gwen Johnston).

Anniversaries:

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/>

September's Intention FOR THE CARE OF WATER

Let us pray for a just and sustainable management of water, a vital resource, so that everyone may have equal access to it.

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



On a first reading of this gospel story, the reader is probably struck by the unfairness of the situation. The landowner has employed day labourers at different times throughout the day to work in his vineyard. However, come the end of the day, the landowner pays all the day labourers the same amount. Not surprisingly, the labourers employed at daybreak to work the whole day are upset that those who have only worked the last hour of the day are

paid the same amount. The landowner reminds them that he is paying them what they agreed at the start of the day, and yet the reader is left uncomfortable about the whole arrangement.

Of course, this is the purpose of Jesus' story! The key to the story is in the introduction. Most of the kingdom parables told by Jesus begin with a formulaic statement, 'The kingdom is like ...' and this one is no different. What follows is almost always a description of an everyday event that is turned on its head. In all of the kingdom parables recorded in the gospels, Jesus describes a world order in which people respond in unexpected and sometimes confusing ways. His message is that the kingdom, or reign, of God turns expectations upside down. In the kingdom, people who are treated badly in this world are held in great esteem; the balance of power is turned upside down; and the usual order of things is challenged. The landowner's final comment in the parable, 'the last will be first, and the first, last', is a perfect example of the challenging nature of Jesus' kingdom parables. In the kingdom, those who hold themselves to be first in this world will be brought down, and those who are treated as least in this world will be exalted.

Historical context – Labourers for hire

Jesus' parable describes a situation that would have been very familiar to his audience. At the time, there were many quite wealthy landowners who controlled large vineyards, orchards and crop fields. They would have employed a certain number of permanent workers but come harvest time there was a need for more workers and, much like today, they sought to employ part time workers for a short period of time until the rush was over. Men looking for work would gather in the marketplace of a village and landowners would select workers and send them to their property to work.

Scriptural context – Kingdom parables

A feature of the kingdom parables that Jesus used is a challenging 'shift' to the unexpected. Jesus only ever uses parables to describe what the kingdom is like, and never says exactly what it is or isn't. In each parable he compares the kingdom of God to something that would be familiar to a 1st century audience but then he twists the familiar and makes the challenging shift by making the familiar, unfamiliar. (This 'shift' is sometimes called a 'discombobulating shift'.) Jesus tells us that the kingdom of God disrupts our normal way of thinking, it turns our expectations upside down and it completely challenges our 'normal' relationships.

Have you thought? Equality or Equity?

How would you feel if you had done a full day's work and were paid the same as someone who had only worked for one hour? Is the landowner in the parable being unjust? He pays the workers exactly what he promised them – but he promised everyone the same amount, regardless of when they started work. The workers who started at 6.00 am complain. How do you think the workers who started later in the day felt? The landowner claims the right to be generous – is generosity unfair? There is a difference between treating people equally and equitably. What has the landowner done here? © 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.

Parish Assembly

There will be a Parish Assembly held on **Sunday 27 September** following the 9:00AM Mass at Belmont. This assembly will focus on Parish finance. There will be a morning tea after Mass and before the Assembly.

Parish Social Event – Melbourne Cup

Parishioners and friends are invited to a social event on Tuesday 3 November, from 11:00AM to 3:30PM, Melbourne Cup Day. Join in a day of fun held in the Belmont Church Hall. Fancy hat optional. Sausage sizzle provided. Please bring a plate to share – salad, savoury, snacks or sweets – if you can note your choice of dish on the sign in sheets. Tea and coffee provided. BYO drinks and light refreshments. Trivia, sweeps, lucky door prizes. To save your seat, please add your name to the expression of interest sheet at the church entrance.

Bulletin Notices, Flyers and Posters

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

New Parish Account – Repairs & Maintenance

The parish has now opened an account specifically for major repairs. Should anyone wish to contribute directly towards this, the account details can be found on the front page.

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. Our next one is **today, 20 September 2026**.

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

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

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

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 **today, 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 4 October @ 12:00PM at Belmont Golf and Bowls Club, 801A Pacific Highway, Marks Point. RSVP before 5:00PM, Thursday 1/10/2026 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

Vocations Ministry – Serra Club

Turning dreams into action. A meeting to organise a club to promote vocations to the ministerial priesthood, the permanent diaconate, and the consecrated (religious) life in the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. Would you like to play a part in actively encouraging and supporting vocations? If so, I invite you to a meeting to consider establishing a Serra Club in our diocese. This local club would be a member of Serra International, a world-wide organisation, affirmed by the Holy See, which is committed to vocations ministry. This initiative has the support of our Bishop, Michael Kennedy. To learn more, please take a flyer at the church entrance. The meeting will be:

When: Thursday, 24 September at 7:00PM

Where: Pastoral Centre Function Room of St Mary of the Cross Parish Hub, 7 Milson Street, Charlestown

RSVP and further information: Contact the Director of Vocations: Fr Anthony Potts E tony.potts@mn.catholic.org.au or M 0466 140 066.

Australian Women's Canon Law Scholarship

Please see the attached flyer and a letter from the Provincial Leader of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart about the Australian Women's Canon Law Scholarship, on the noticeboard and emailed.

This scholarship is a collaborative initiative established by a number of women religious congregations in Australia committed to building capacity within the Church by supporting women to undertake studies in Canon Law.

Expressions of interest are now open with further information about the scholarship available at: <https://mailchi.mp/7342de0a0e81/australian-women-in-canon-law-scholarship>

World Youth Day 2027

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, E mission@mn.catholic.org.au

Other News

112th World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2026

Message of Pope Leo XIV: "**Even Just One of These Children**" (cf. Mt 18:10)

For more go to <https://acmro.catholic.org.au/wdmr/2026>

Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

Entrance Antiphon

I am the salvation of the people, says the Lord.
Should they cry to me in any distress,
I will hear them, and I will be their Lord for ever.

First Reading

Isaiah 55:6-9

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

My thoughts are not your thoughts.

Seek the Lord while he is still to be found,
call to him while he is still near.
Let the wicked man abandon his way,
the evil man his thoughts.
Let him turn back to the Lord who will take pity on him,
to our God who is rich in forgiving;
for my thoughts are not your thoughts,
my ways not your ways – it is the Lord who speaks.
Yes, the heavens are as high above earth
as my ways are above your ways,
my thoughts above your thoughts.

The Word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 144:2-3. 8-9. 17-18. R. v.18

(R.) The Lord is near to all who call him.

1. I will bless you day after day
and praise your name for ever.
The Lord is great, highly to be praised,
his greatness cannot be measured.
2. The Lord is kind and full of compassion,
slow to anger, abounding in love.
How good is the Lord to all,
compassionate to all his creatures.
3. The Lord is just in all his ways
and loving in all his deeds.
He is close to all who call him,
who call on him from their hearts.

Second Reading

Philippians 1:20-24. 27

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians

For me to live is Christ.

Christ will be glorified in my body, whether by my life or by my death. Life to me, of course, is Christ, but then death would bring me something more; but then again, if living in this body means doing work which is having good results – I do not know what I should choose. I am caught in this dilemma: I want to be gone and be with Christ, which would be very much the better, but for me to stay alive in this body is a more urgent need for your sake.

Avoid anything in your everyday lives that would be unworthy of the gospel of Christ.

The Word of the Lord.

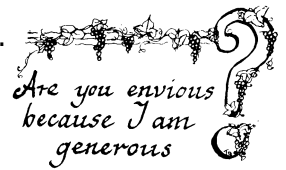
Gospel Acclamation

See Acts of the Apostles 16:14

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.
Open our hearts, O Lord,
To listen to the words of your Son.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

Matthew 20:1-16



A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Why are you jealous because I am generous?

Jesus said to his disciples: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner going out at daybreak to hire workers for his vineyard. He made an agreement with the workers for one denarius a day, and sent them to his vineyard. Going out at about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the market place and said to them, "You go to my vineyard too and I will give you a fair wage." So they went. At about the sixth hour and again at about the ninth hour, he went out and did the same. Then at about the eleventh hour he went out and found more men standing round, and he said to them, "Why have you been standing here idle all day?" "Because no one has hired us" they answered. He said to them, "You go into my vineyard too." In the evening, the owner of the vineyard said to his bailiff, "Call the workers and pay them their wages, starting with the last arrivals and ending with the first." So those who were hired at about the eleventh hour came forward and received one denarius each. When the first came, they expected to get more, but they too received one denarius each. They took it, but grumbled at the landowner. "The men who came last" they said "have done only one hour, and you have treated them the same as us, though we have done a heavy day's work in all the heat." He answered one of them and said, "My friend, I am not being unjust to you; did we not agree on one denarius? Take your earnings and go. I choose to pay the last-comer as much as I pay you. Have I no right to do what I like with my own? Why be envious because I am generous?" Thus the last will be first, and the first, last.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Communion Antiphon

Psalm 118:4-5

You have laid down your precepts to be carefully kept;
may my ways be firm in keeping your statutes.

OR John 10:14

I am the Good Shepherd, says the Lord;
I know my sheep, and mine know me.



Next Week's Readings

Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

First Reading	Ezekiel 18:25-28
Responsorial Psalm	Ps 24:4-9. R. v.6
Second Reading	Philippians 2:1-11
Gospel Acclamation	John 10:27
Gospel	Matthew 21:28-32