



ST JAMES' PARISH

St James Muswellbrook
St Thomas Aberdeen



traditional owners who cared for this land for thousands of years and their
maintained these spiritual connections and traditions

PARISH CONTACTS

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Website:

www.muswellbrookcatholicparish.org.au

20th Sunday in Ordinary Time – YEAR A

16th August 2026

Entrance Antiphon

Psalm 83:10-11

Turn your eyes, O God, our shield;
and look on the face of your anointed one;
one day within your courts
is better than a thousand elsewhere.

First Reading

Isaiah 56:1.6-7

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

I will lead the foreigners to my holy mountain.

Thus says the Lord: Have a care for justice, act with integrity, for soon my salvation will come and my integrity be manifest.

Foreigners who have attached themselves to the Lord to serve him and to love his name and be his servants – all who observe the sabbath, not profaning it, and cling to my covenant – these I will bring to my holy mountain. I will make them joyful in my house of prayer. Their holocausts and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar, for my house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 66:2-3 5-6. 8. R. v.4

(R.) O God, let all the nations praise you!

1. O God, be gracious and bless us
and let your face shed its light upon us.

So will your ways be known upon earth
and all nations learn your saving help. **(R.)**

2. Let the nations be glad and exult
for you rule the world with justice.
With fairness you rule the peoples,
you guide the nations on earth. **(R.)**
3. Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.
May God still give us his blessing
till the ends of the earth revere him. **(R.)**

Second Reading

Romans 11:13-15. 29-32

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

The gifts and call of God are irrevocable.

Let me tell you pagans this: I have been sent to the pagans as their apostle, and I am proud of being sent, but the purpose of it is to make my own people envious of you, and in this way save some of them. Since their rejection meant the reconciliation of the world, do you know what their admission will mean? Nothing less than a resurrection from the dead! God never takes back his gifts or revokes his choice.

Just as you changed from being disobedient to God, and now enjoy mercy because of their disobedience, so those who are disobedient now – and only because of the mercy shown to you – will also enjoy mercy eventually. God has imprisoned all men in their own disobedience only to show mercy to all mankind.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Weekly Mass Diary

Monday 17 th August	Tuesday 18 th August	Wednesday 19 th August	Thursday 20 th August	Friday 21 st August	Saturday 22 nd August	Sunday 23 rd August
			<i>St Bernard, abbot, doctor</i>	<i>St Pius X, pope</i>	<i>The Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i>	21st Sunday in Ordinary Time
		9.00am Mass St James Church	11.30 am Mass St James Church	9.00 am Mass St James Church	9.00 am Mass St James Church 5.30 pm Vigil Mass St James Church	10.00 am Mass St James Church
	5.00pm Mass St Thomas Aberdeen					8.00 am Mass St Thomas Aberdeen

Minister Roster Sunday 23rd August 2026

4 th Sunday of Month	Readers	Cantors	Musician	Gifts	Counters	Altar Server	Sacristan
5.30pm Saturday Muswellbrook	M Carter T Threadgate	C Hayes	Sr. Dorothy			Ryan	C. Hayes
8.00 am Sunday Aberdeen	J Lonergan K Mason	K Mason	C Bowen			Wes	
10.00am Sunday Muswellbrook	M Medhurst	M Kelly	C Kelly		J Grenfell	Stella Liam	J. Grenfell

MASS AND PRAYER REQUESTS:

We remember and pray for those who are ill at home and in hospital at this time, may they know the healing presence of Christ: Beate Shanahan, Mick Chisolm, Charles Sadgrove, Linda Bates, Jenelyn Regala, Florentino Mateo, Eunice Benn, Vhiel Bobadillah, Anne Hugo, Rochelle Ashman, Kym Mason, Rodelio Borress, and Sr Gaye Lennon.

Anniversary: Joyce Tanner.

Recently Deceased:

Baptisms:

Privacy Laws. All parishioners are encouraged to pray for the sick. Masses will be offered on request. Due to privacy laws, names of the sick and deceased can only be put in the bulletin with the permission of the immediate family

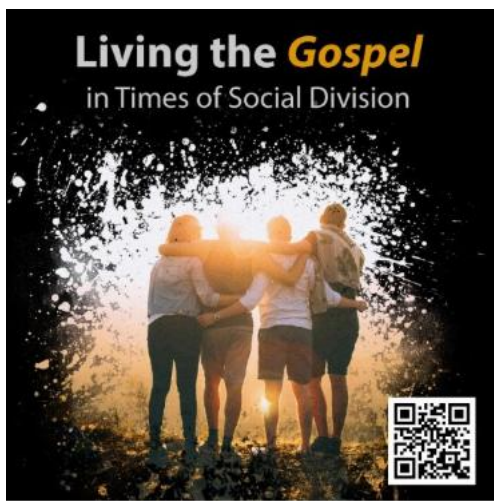
St James and St Thomas - Pray for Us

BULLETIN Please contact the Parish Office on 6543 1167 if you have any notices for the bulletin, or alternatively email: muswellbrookparish@mn.catholic.org.au. The Parish bulletin can be accessed on our website: muswellbrookcatholicparish.org.au or on our Facebook page: **Catholic Parish of St James Muswellbrook** Please email muswellbrookparish@mn.catholic.org.au if you would like the bulletin emailed to you each week.

Muswellbrook Parish Direct Giving Banking Details: BSB: 066739 Account Number: 100 003 823 These numbers will show a warning that the numbers can't be verified, but that is fine, as long as the BSB is correct.

SAFEGUARDING THE MOST VULNERABLE IN OUR COMMUNITY Please visit our 'Safeguarding' page to access a range of safeguarding resources: muswellbrookcatholicparish.org.au Have a complaint or wish to provide feedback? Visit: officeofsafeguarding.org.au/feedback/ Muswellbrook Parish Promotor of Safeguarding: Jane Jacobs (Contact via Parish Office).

"Our mission is to spread the Kingdom by being an alive and informed Community, united as one family in care and consideration for each other in the love of God."



Living the Gospel in Times of Social Division

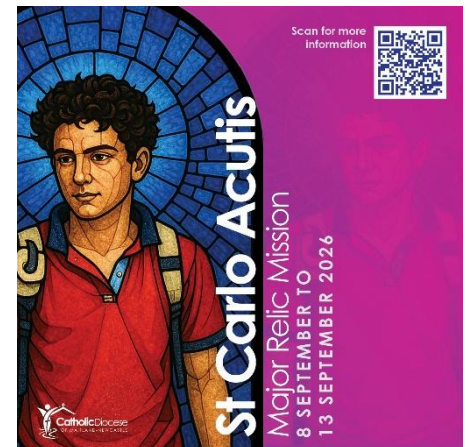
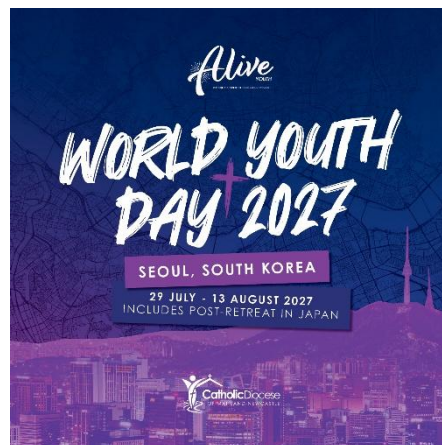
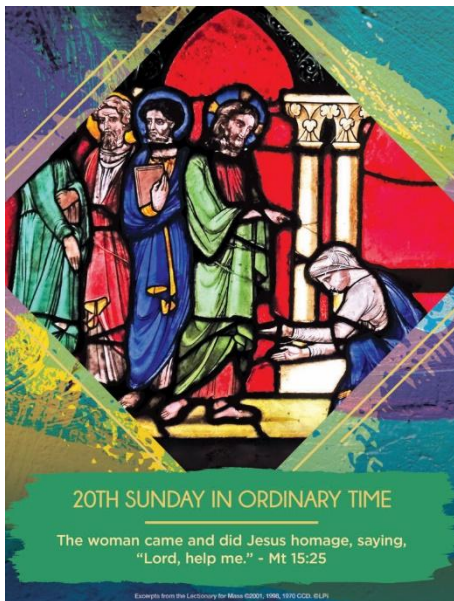
Bishop Michael Kennedy reflects on the latest Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Social Justice Statement and the Gospel call to be people of encounter and reconciliation. Scan the QR code or visit <https://mn.catholic.org.au/news/living-the-gospel-in-times-of-social-division-a-message-from-bishop-michael-kennedy/>

Leading into Social Justice Sunday on **30 August**, parishes are encouraged to reflect on the 'culture of encounter' as part of our current season of listening assemblies and renewal.

St Carlo Acutis Major Relic Mission

As the Diocese journeys towards Eucharist28 with Pope Leo XIV we are proud to be hosting the first-class relics of a millennial Saint – Carlo Acutis (September 8-14). During his young life, Carlo created the Eucharistic Miracle Exhibition, which will also accompany the tour. See the schedule that covers the Reception of the Relic at our Cathedral, Upper Hunter Encounter, Northern Region Encounter and the Newcastle City Basin Encounter. The pilgrimage has been drawing tens of thousands from across Australia and New Zealand these past months and we are looking forward to host. **The Relic is at St Josephs Aberdeen on Wednesday 9th September AD2026.**

Learn More: [St Carlo Acutis Relic Mission - Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle](#)



O God, who have prepared for those who love you good things which no eye can see, fill our hearts, we pray, with the warmth of your love, so that, loving you in all things and above all things, we may attain your promises, which surpass every human desire. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

Diocesan Events Page on the Website



There are many wonderful, inspiring and engaging things happening across our Parishes and in the Diocese. Keep up to date and share these in your communities using the link or QR code.

<https://mn.catholic.org.au/cdmn-news/events/>

Hello Sunday!



May your cup Overflow
with many blessings today.
Sending hugs and a little love
to wish you a wonderful week to come.

Thank you to all who participated in The Synodal Way on Wednesday night.



Gospel Acclamation Matthew 4:23

Alleluia, alleluia!

Jesus preached the Good News of the kingdom and healed all who were sick.

Alleluia!

Gospel Matthew 15:21-28

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Woman, you have great faith.

Jesus left Gennesaret and withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. Then out came a Canaanite woman from that district and started shouting, 'Sir, Son of David, take pity on me. My daughter is tormented by a devil.' But he answered her not a word. And his disciples went and pleaded with him. 'Give her what she wants,' they said 'because she is shouting after us.' He said in reply, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the House of Israel.' But the woman had come up and was kneeling at his feet. 'Lord,' she said 'help me.' He replied, 'It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the house-dogs.' She retorted, 'Ah yes, sir; but even house-dogs can eat the scraps that fall from their master's table.' Then Jesus answered her, 'Woman, you have great faith. Let your wish be granted.' And from that moment her daughter was well again.

The Gospel of our Lord.

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Communion Antiphon Psalm 129:7

With the Lord there is mercy;
in him is plentiful redemption.

HOMILY by Fr Michael Tate On Catholic Dogs

We are all familiar with the diabolical hatred between religious and ethnic groups which lead into the descent into barbarism.

On a lesser scale, differences between ethnic or religious groups can lead to profound chasms of intolerance opening up between them.

In our Lord's time, the division between Jews and Pagans was very profound. Pagans (most often called gentiles), were outside the chosen people, the children of God, and there was a long history of antagonism.

This is the setting for this remarkable gospel story.

A *pagan woman* approaches a *Jewish man*: Jesus. The disciples react to a woman causing a commotion.

She *is* causing a commotion, but for a good reason. She begs Jesus to heal her daughter with

whom she maternally completely identifies: 'Have mercy on me.'

He comments: 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the House of Israel.' He is confirming his healing mission to the Jews. She and her daughter don't qualify!

What is going on? We know that the Prophet Isaiah was a great favourite and exemplar for Jesus. Jesus could open a scroll and quote passages which guided his own understanding of his mission. Jesus had evidently taken Isaiah's picture of a transformed Jewish people being a light to the pagan nations who would *then* be attracted to worship God in the right way.

That is the two-stage sequence which Jesus has embarked on.

Jesus therefore gives a very dismissive answer to the woman: 'It is not fair to take the children's bread and throw it to the house dogs.' The children are obviously the Jewish people, and so Jesus' response is very confronting.

This remarkable *woman*, this remarkable *pagan* woman, stands her ground and engages in a verbal joust with Jesus! She decides to give him as good as she got! She argues: 'Yes, Lord, but even the house dogs get the crumbs that fall from their master's table.'

What a fantastic response! Jesus recognises *her* faith and the daughter was healed.

What a fantastic woman! *She*, a pagan woman, helped Jesus see that his liberating mission, his healing, saving mission, was not a careful two-stage affair, Jews first, pagans later. His saving mission was for *all* those who had faith in him – *wherever* and *whenever*.

This story was treasured and remembered in the early church and then put into writing in the Gospels. Why? Because the biggest crisis facing the early church was relations between Jewish Christians and possible pagan converts who wanted to be followers of Jesus. This story would have been told to show how Jesus extended his saving mission to non-Jews in Pagan territory.

That is good news for us, Gospel for us, Gospel for billions of non-Jewish people over the course of history since then and into the future. That is why we are truly 'Catholic', which, as you know, is the Greek for 'universal', 'world-wide'.

This woman is the one whose story was treasured as opening up the Church to being truly universal – a home for all people – a place where the 'whole' of humanity can be made 'whole' in every way.

That is what it means to be 'Catholic'. Could this Canaanite woman be celebrated as the first 'Catholic'?