



St Mary Immaculate & St Patrick's PARISH OF THE CLARENCE VALLEY

Copmanhurst & Cowper *Grafton & South Grafton*



Cowper

Parish Office: 2 Clarence Street
Phone: 66439017 **Fax:** 66431388
Email:
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P.O. Box 577, Grafton NSW 2460
Website: cvcparish.org.au

Office Hours:
 8.30am to 3.30pm Monday to Friday

St. Mary's Church, Grafton
 Victoria Street, Grafton

St Patrick's Church
 Skinner Street, South Grafton

Mary Immaculate Church
 Cowper

St John of the Cross
 Copmanhurst

McAuley Catholic College
 Hennessy Drive, Clarence
Phone: 02 66431434
Email: grafs@lism.catholic.edu.au

St. Mary's Primary School
 Turf Street, Grafton
Phone: 02 66422262
Email: grafp@lism.catholic.edu.au

St Joseph's Primary School
 Hyde Street, South Grafton
Phone: 02 66422899
Email: sgrafp@lism.catholic.edu.au

Parish Priest: Fr Felix Ekeh
Assist. Priest:
 Fr Emmanuel Okparanaku



Copmanhurst

Twenty Third Sunday in Ordinary Time - Year C

7th September 2025

Parish Family News

Carrying the cross for Jesus

The good news revealed by Jesus includes many demanding and sometimes scandalous teachings. As the writer of today's first reading discerns, we probably would not have come to the same conclusions as God if we were in charge. When it comes to living how God wants us to, "who could have learnt it, had you not granted Wisdom, and sent your holy spirit from above?"

To be a Christian is to believe that God has shown us who he is and what he wants from us, even if that means embracing what the rest of the world derides as shameful foolishness.

The second reading presents a perfect example of the wisdom of God colliding with the wisdom of the age. Paul, writing from prison, exhorts a fellow Christian, Philemon, to welcome and free his runaway slave, Onesimus. This was a powerfully countercultural appeal in a status-obsessed Greco-Roman society where slavery was as common as owning cars is today.

Runaway slaves could expect severe punishment or execution if they were caught. The culture was so dependent on the practice that society stood against any show of leniency to slaves. But Paul doesn't just ask Philemon to receive Onesimus back as his slave. He encourages Philemon to free the runaway slave and embrace him as a brother.

The wisdom of God teaches that baptism into Christ establishes an identity that is apart from and superior to all other kinds of social and cultural affiliations. Paul is encouraging Philemon to reject the entire social and moral order that his world was built upon, in order to testify to the love and wisdom of God.

In this week's gospel, Jesus takes it one rather startling step further and explains that following him requires a willingness to hate even our own relatives. Here Jesus is using a Jewish idiom that uses hyperbole to indicate a clear preference and priority. This is, after all, the same Jesus who commands us to love our enemies, let alone our own flesh and blood.

But the point still stands: God takes priority, even over every other good thing in our lives. Jesus is saying that to follow him means not letting rejection by or condemnation from the world, or even from our own loved ones, stop us from following him.

There will be times in our lives when we face difficult consequences for living the way God wants us to, whether it's because we're standing up to the social and moral injustices of our time or because we prioritise God over other things, activities and people. This is why Jesus said, "Anyone who does not carry his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple."

If we believe that Jesus is who he says he is, the one who 'straightens our paths' and 'saves us by his wisdom', then let us join him on the road to Calvary and choose his ways over the ways of the world.

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Television Free to Air—Channel Ten—Sunday Mass at 6am

Mass Sunday—Livestreamed on Lismore Diocesan You Tube channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/c/LismoreDioceseAU>

Also the following has Mass on demand.
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYRq7AjiVimr-hcHFJD_HVaQ



DIARY OF THE WEEK: LITURGIES, DEVOTIONS ETC

Saturday 6th September

9.00am Mass at St Patrick's Church South Grafton

4.15pm—4.45pm Reconciliation at St Mary's Church

5.00pm Vigil Mass at St Mary's Church Grafton

Sunday 7th September - Twenty Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

8.00am Mass at St Mary's Church Grafton

8.00am Mass at Mary Immaculate Church Cowper

9.30am Mass at St Patrick's Church South Grafton

Monday 8th September - The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

5.30pm Mass at St Mary's Church Grafton

Tuesday 9th September

5.15pm Mass at St Mary's Church Grafton

Wednesday 10th September

8.00am Mass at St Mary's Church Grafton

Thursday 11th September

NO 9.15am MASS

****11.00am Funeral Mass-Ron McLennan-St Patrick's Church****

Friday 12th September

**11.30am—11.55am Reconciliation and
Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament**

12.00noon Mass at St Mary's Church Grafton

Saturday 13th September - St John Chrysostom, bishop, doctor

9.00am Mass at St Patrick's Church South Grafton

4.15pm—4.45pm Reconciliation at St Mary's Church

5.00pm Vigil Mass at St Mary's Church Grafton

Sunday 14th September - The Exaltation of the Holy Cross

8.00am Mass at St Mary's Church Grafton

8.00am Mass at Mary Immaculate Church Cowper

9.30am Mass at St Patrick's Church South Grafton

TODAY 8.00am Mass 7th September at St Mary's Church, Grafton

McAuley Catholic College students and staff will be assisting at the Sunday Mass doing various ministries.

Please join with us for a Family Mass followed by morning tea.

Sacraments - Reconciliation / First Holy Communion

First Holy Communion will be held on **NEXT Weekend**
13/14 September.

Please keep the children in your prayers.

Meetings at the McCarthy Centre

All **Extra Ordinary Ministers** are requested to attend a meeting **THIS Wednesday, 10th September at 5pm.**

All Parents who have booked in their **children for Baptism** or who are looking to organise one in the next few months are requested to attend a **Baptism Preparation** meeting, **Wednesday, 17th September, 5.30pm** (No longer than 1 hour). **Children are welcome.**

Please remember in your prayers:

Those who are sick and frail: especially Edward Morley, Matthew Bertalli, James Irwin, Allan Albert, Billy Eckersley, Marlene Cain (Hervey Bay), Margaret Gallagher (Cessnock), Lleyton Roughly, Veronica Graham, Gayle Owens, Fr Frank Mulcahy, Paul Murphy, Derek Lentfer, Shane Lewis, Peter Cochrane, Paul Gallagher, Ian Huxley, Mary O'Brien, Dr Anselm Okechukwu, Rod Hughes, Alfred Morris, Ray Hynes, Fr Anthony Lemon, Jeannette Davies, Margaret Knight, Bev Merrick (NZ), Lee Denton, Eamon McLaughlin, Joan Knox, Chris Small, Cheryl Kinnane, Dot Dougherty, Sandy Beadman, Gwen Haynes, Sonya Moore, Moya Ellem (Melb), Fay Ellem, John McAnally, Darcy Patricks, Eli Hagar, Shona Owens, Jacinta Frawley-Werger, Amanda Crawford, Aileen Whalan, Bree Brossman, & all those in hospital.

The Recently Deceased: including Ronald McLennan, Olga Morrissey, Patricia Eastick, Joan Kean, Daphne Robson, Claire Henry.

Those whose Anniversaries are at this time: including Fr William Nicol, Fr Francis Walsh, Fr Douglas Stewart, Maureen Endean, Paul Walsh, Joan Cootes, Jim Boswell, John Fahey, Nanette Bradley, Kathleen Wheeler, Chris Boswell, Margaret Norton.

Other Mass Intentions: including Marina L Jumao-as, Don Bellamy, Mark Bellamy, and all the Holy Souls.

Mass Attendance

*Anyone who is unwell **should not** attend Mass.

*Hand sanitiser will continue to be available.

Thank you for your continued co-operation.

2025 Clarence Valley Parish 200 Club-Week 19

473 1st Prize \$60 Christian Moran
344 2nd Prize \$30 Cathie Perking
344 3rd Prize \$10 Cathie Perking

**FINAL Draw for the 2025 - 200 Club is this
Monday, 8th September.**

Parish Notices

**Friday 12th September - Charismatic Prayer
Group Meeting** at McCarthy Centre. 12.45pm
to 3pm.

*Happy Father's Day, and thank
you to all our wonderful Dads,
Granddads and Great Granddads.

Have a wonderful day.*

Settling in

I am safely back from my holidays. To God be the glory. To the wonderful parishioners of Clarence Valley Parish, I say thank you for your prayers for safe journey. I am still settling in gradually.

Who am I?

My name is Felix Chukwunonso Ekeh. I was ordained a catholic priest on 16th July 2005 at the Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity in Onitsha Archdiocese, Nigeria. Before my appointment as the Parish Priest of Clarence Valley Parish, effective 1st June 2025, I have worked in different parishes in Nigeria and in Australia. I came to Australia in 2008 for pastoral work in Hobart Archdiocese in Tasmania for six and half years. I came to Lismore Diocese NSW in 2015 and was at St Carthage's Cathedral Lismore as one of the assistant priests. I was transferred to Wauchope Parish as the Parish Administrator from January 2016 to May 2025.

Gratitude

I thank my predecessor, Fr Joe Holloway for the great pastoral work he did when he was the Parish Priest of Clarence Valley Parish. His administration took our parish steps higher. I also wish to thank you, the parishioners, for the great support you gave him when he was the parish priest. I thank you for the support you gave Fr Emmanuel who piloted the affairs of our parish while I was away for holidays (together with Fr Jim Carty, Fr Philip, Fr Bing & Fr Alex who supplied). I thank the members of the parish finance council for their great service to the parish and fruitful advice they give to the priests. I thank you all for keeping the parish going. Together we keep on keeping on. Thank you for your maximum cooperation.

May God continue to bless us all and may His abundant grace continue to abide with us, and may the Holy Spirit be our guide and support. Your prayers, sacrifices and support are appreciated.

I extend my warmest regard to all the fathers this weekend. Happy Fathers' Day and more blessing.

The Lord is Good... All the time...!

Fr Felix Ekeh, Parish Priest 3 September 2025



Welcome Arlo Chevalley to the Catholic Community through the Sacrament of Baptism.

Schoolzine eNewsletter!

McAuley Catholic College

<https://mcaulcgrafton.schoolzineplus.com/schoolnews?nid=119>

St Mary's Primary School

<https://grafplism.catholic.edu.au/schoolnews?nid=116>

St Joseph's Primary School

<https://sgrafplism.catholic.edu.au/enews?nid=125>

Or View/Download a PDF copy from the websites.

Father's Day Collection to support our

Sick & Retired Priests of the Diocese

is being held this weekend.

Envelopes are available in the porches.

National Child Protection Week

7—13 September 2025

**Every conversation matters -
but words alone are not enough.**

This year's National Child Protection Week theme, 'Every conversation matters: Shifting Conversation to Action,' reminds us that while dialogue is essential when it comes to raising awareness, challenging harmful norms, and sparking new ideas, real change is only possible when we turn those conversations into meaningful action.

NAPCAN is committed to moving beyond talk, focusing on concrete steps that prevent harm to children.

Through strengthening prevention and advocacy initiatives, we're empowering communities to actively protect every child, ensuring they not only feel heard but truly experience safety, care, and protection.

Safeguarding Children and Young People?

We ask that parents are accompanying and supervising their own children at all times. Your child's safety is our priority please ensure you can always see them whilst on Parish grounds.

Safeguarding Office:
P: 02 6621 9444 (Chancery)
E: safeguarding@lismore.catholic.org.au

YA Camp - 4 Days of Camping, Worship and Peace near Murwillumbah—December 12-15

The Lismore Diocese is offering subsidies to young adults to attend **YA Festival** near Murwillumbah in December this year. The Festival is open to adults aged 18-30 and will be facilitated by Ignite Youth, who hold the annual Ignite Conference in Brisbane each year and has been attended by hundreds of youths from the Diocese. According to Zac Parnell, Youth: Ministry and Music Coordinator at St Agnes Parish and former presenter at YA Fest, "the YA Festival is like no other Catholic event, it involves taking three nights away from the noise of life to camp and reconnect with Jesus through prayer, fellowship, and formation. The formation sessions are crafted specifically for young adults, targeting themes and issues that most of them experience."

Link: [YA Festival — Ignite Youth](#)

Link to Microsoft form for registrations: <https://forms.office.com/r/xUdVB6YxRj> (close 14/11 unless subsidies exhausted prior)

YA Festival Registration form for Diocesan Participants



Weekend September 13/14	St Mary's Church Saturday 5.00pm	St Mary's Church Sunday 8.00am	St Patrick's Church Sunday 9.30am	Mary Immaculate Sunday 8.00am
Commentator	Sr Colleen	Ignatius Hassett	Jim O'Donohue	Barry Walker
Reader	Cathy Danaher	Hannah Gorman	Nancy Crook	Basil Moran
Extraordinary Minister	Ray Cavanagh	Monica McTaggart	Gary Scurrah	

A reading from the book of Wisdom 9: 13-18

Who can comprehend the will of God?

'What man can know the intentions of God?
Who can divine the will of the Lord?
The reasonings of mortals are unsure
and our intentions unstable;
for a perishable body presses down the soul,
and this tent of clay weighs down the teeming mind.
It is hard enough for us to work out what is on earth,
laborious to know what lies within our reach;
who, then, can discover what is in the heavens?
As for your intention, who could have learnt it,
had you not granted Wisdom
and sent your holy spirit from above?
Thus have the paths of those on earth been straightened
and men been taught what pleases you,
and saved, by Wisdom.
The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 89

R: In every age, O Lord, you have been our refuge.

You turn men back into dust and say: "Go back, sons of men." To your eyes a thousand years are like yesterday, come and gone, no more than a watch in the night. **R.**

You sweep men away like a dream, like grass which springs up in the morning. In the morning it springs up and flowers: by evening it withers and fades. **R.**

Make us know the shortness of our life that we may gain wisdom of heart. Lord, relent! Is your anger for ever? Show pity to your servants. **R.**

In the morning, fill us with your love; we shall exult and rejoice all our days. Let the favour of the Lord be upon us: give success to the work of our hands. **R.**

A reading from the letter of St Paul to Philemon 1: 9-10, 12-17

Receive him, not as a slave anymore, but as a very dear brother.

This is Paul writing, an old man now and, what is more, still a prisoner of Christ Jesus. I am appealing to you for a child of mine, whose father I became while wearing these chains: I mean Onesimus. I am sending him back to you, and with him - I could say - a part of my own self. I should have liked to keep him with me; he could have been a substitute for you, to help me while I am in the chains that the Good News has brought me. However, I did not want to do anything without your consent; it would have been forcing your act of kindness, which should be spontaneous. I know you have been deprived of Onesimus for a time, but it was only so that you could have him back for ever, not as a slave any more, but something much better than a slave, a dear brother; especially dear to me, but how much more to you, as a blood-brother as well as a brother in the Lord. So if all that we have in common means anything to you, welcome him as you would me.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

Let your face shine on your servant,
and teach me your laws.

Alleluia!

Gospel: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke 14: 25-33

All who do not renounce their possessions cannot be my disciples.

Great crowds accompanied Jesus on his way and he turned and spoke to them. 'If any man comes to me without hating his father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, yes, and his own life too, he cannot be my disciple. Anyone who does not carry his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.

'And indeed, which of you here, intending to build a tower, would not first sit down and work out the cost to see if he had enough to complete it? Otherwise, if he laid the foundation and then found himself unable to finish the work, the onlookers would all start making fun of him and saying, "Here is a man who started to build and was unable to finish." Or again, what king marching to war against another king would not first sit down and consider whether with ten thousand men he could stand up to the other who advanced against him with twenty thousand? If not, then while the other king was still a long way off, he would send envoys to sue for peace. So in the same way, none of you can be my disciple unless he gives up all his possessions.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Communion Antiphon: Like the deer that yearns for running streams, so my soul is yearning for you, my God; my soul is thirsting for God, the living God.

Next Week's Readings: (Holy Cross, Year C)

Exodus 32: 7-11, 13-14; Psalm 50; 1 Timothy 1: 12-17; Luke 15: 1-32

A warm welcome to visitors & parishioners (who are new or returning) to our church. If you would like to receive our Church bulletin via email on Friday afternoon please email: admin@clarencevalleyparish.com.au

Visitor bookmark available in porch.

Planned Giving - Details for **electronic funds transfer (EFT).**

Banking details are:

Second Collection - for support of our Parish, including maintenance of our churches and parish buildings, parish office wages and administration expenses.

BSB: 062546 Account Number: 00800690

Name: Grafton Catholic Church.

First Collection - for the support of our clergy locally and in the Diocese.

BSB: 062546 Account Number: 00800535

Name: RC Lismore Presbyterium Grafton

In the details section of your online deposits please record your surname or Planned Giving number **eg Smith or PG500.**



Diocesan
Investment
Fund

Interest Rate—3.65%

**For further information and
our current interest rate, please visit our website.**

The DIF contributes to the printing of the weekly newsletter.