

people today no longer carry cash. For this reason, from now on we will begin passing the EFTPOS machine during both collections at our weekend Masses, alongside the usual collection baskets, giving everyone a convenient opportunity to contribute.

The strength of a parish is not measured simply by the number of people who attend Mass, but also by our sense of belonging, commitment and willingness to share responsibility for the community we call our own. Maintaining our churches and sustaining parish life is a responsibility we share together.

By the middle of October, I intend to provide you with a financial report for the first quarter of this financial year. This will give us an opportunity to understand our financial position more clearly and to discuss together how we can plan responsibly for the future. However, our present situation requires immediate attention, and I felt it was important not to wait until then before speaking with you.

Thank you for your understanding, generosity and continued support of our parish. Every contribution, large or small, makes a difference.

2. Formation and Training for Parish Ministries

Over the coming months, we are planning several formation and training opportunities for our liturgical ministers. We are grateful to all our volunteers, including those who have faithfully served our parish community for many years.

Every ministry benefits from ongoing formation. Knowledge develops, pastoral circumstances change, and good practice can always be strengthened. This is equally true of our liturgical and spiritual ministries. Training is not a criticism of what has been done in the past; rather, it is an opportunity to renew our understanding, develop our skills and serve the community with greater confidence, reverence and competence.

Training for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion is scheduled for Wednesday 21 October at 6.30 pm and Saturday 24 Octber at 10.30 am. We are also planning a formation session for our Musicians during October and, depending upon the availability of suitable resource persons, hope to arrange training for our Readers/Proclaimers of the Word before Christmas.

A thoughtful and well-prepared approach to ministry is ultimately an expression of love and respect for the people we serve and for the sacred responsibilities entrusted to us. In the coming weeks, we will continue to reflect on our various parish ministries and how each of us can contribute to building a prayerful, welcoming and vibrant parish community.

3. New Newsletter Series – The Ten Commandments:

Beginning with this weekend's newsletter, we are introducing a new series on the Ten Commandments, exploring their deeper meaning and their practical application to our daily lives.

The Ten Commandments are much more than a list of rules; they offer us a pathway for our relationship with God and with one another, helping to shape our choices, values and way of living.

I warmly encourage you to follow the series each week without missing an article, take time to read and reflect upon it, and consider how each Commandment speaks to your own life. I hope this effort will become a valuable opportunity for all of us to deepen our faith and allow God's Word to shape the way we live. Fr Paul

25 September 2026

To the People of the Diocese regarding upcoming Parish Priest Appointments

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

You may be aware that I am currently seeking expressions of interest for the appointment of Parish Priests to multiple parishes across the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.

Parish Priest appointments are generally for six years, and in some cases by mutual agreement are extended for an additional term or terms.

Over the past twelve months you may have noticed some of our Parish Priests becoming 'Administrators' as their term as Parish Priest ended. In some of our parish communities, Parish Priests have reached retirement age. And in other places new parish configurations have opened new possibilities for Parish Priest appointments.

Therefore, it has been my plan to create an opportunity in these final months of 2026 whereby all the priests have an opportunity to express their interest in being appointed Parish Priest in approximately twelve vacant parishes at the same time.

My hope is that following the success of parish assemblies across the Diocese this year, and the subsequent identification of pastoral priorities, I can help match, in dialogue with our priests, and their particular charism, and giftings, the most appropriate pastor to journey with you into the future.

The timing of appointments will vary throughout the remainder of this year and into the early new year. I look forward to sharing these with you.

In parishes where you will be receiving a new Parish Priest, please be assured that parish life and the work of your pastoral planning and parish renewal should not halt. The mission of the Church is absolutely yours to continue – with both your outgoing Parish Priest and incoming Parish Priest.

Yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Michael Kennedy, Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle.

POF: Next week 11/10 Sr Mary

St Patrick - Pray for us,
Our Lady of Victories - Pray for us

Items for inclusion in this Newsletter

Please email or write out to: wallsendshortlandparish@mn.catholic.org.au
Cut Off 1:00pm Tuesday.

WE PRAY FOR

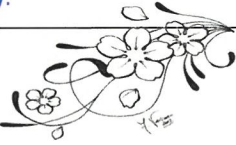
The Recently Deceased:

Anniversaries: Janice Jennings

Please Note: Masses will be offered upon request. Mass Request Envelopes are available in the church foyer. In accordance with privacy legislation, the names of the sick and deceased may only be published in the parish Newsletter with the permission of the immediate family.

The Sick:

Stanley & Jacinta, Betty Johnston, Helena Kim, John Murray, Maxine Norris, Garry Roberts, Liam Potter, Betty Nyman, Len Johnson, Pat Jones, Karyn Jones, Tracy Butler, Tracey Coates, Arlette Nicholls, Audrey King, Anne Gleeson, Janina McPherson, Mary Vimala, James Crook, Michael Bartley, Theresa Lee, Mary Neider, Janelle Anderson, Brenda Matulis, Julie Matulis, Allison Hillery, Denise McGee, Vicki Feenan, Phillip Hamilton (Once the person is no longer in need of prayer, would you kindly inform the Parish Office.)



DIVINE MERCY Parish

WALLSEND - SHORTLAND

PARISH NEWSLETTER

OUR LADY OF VICTORIES, SHORTLAND
262 Sandgate Rd,
Shortland NSW 2307



ST PATRICK'S, WALLSEND
11 Macquarie St,
Wallsend NSW 2287



LOVE



SERVE



GROW

A welcoming
community

: United in Faith,
: Guided by Mercy,
: Alive in Christ.



We acknowledge the Awabakal people
the traditional custodians of this land.

Priest - Urgent After Hours Phone: 0428 624 287

PARISH ADMINISTRATOR: FR PAUL CHACKANIKUNNEL

Email: paul.chackanikunnel@mn.catholic.org.au

PARISH OFFICE: Sr Mary Hue Tam, IHM

Ph: 0406 726 611 or 02 49559575

Email: wallsendshortlandparish@mn.catholic.org.au

Office Hours: Monday to Friday 9.00 am - 2.00 pm

Address: 11 Macquarie Street, Wallsend NSW 2287

Mail: PO Box 301, Wallsend NSW 2287

Parish Pastoral Council: Mrs Diana Brodie (Chair)

Parish Finance Council: Mrs Caroline Walker (Chair)

Sacramental Coordinator: Mrs Tinah Deluca-Tohi

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults:

Richard Thomson 0424 503 183

Funeral Ministry: Joy Cork 0432 239 610

PARISH SCHOOLS:

1. Saint Patrick's Primary School

11 Macquarie Street, Wallsend NSW 2287

PRINCIPAL: Mr Michael Deed

Postal Address: PO Box 190, Wallsend NSW 2287

Phone: (02) 49558570

Email: admin@wallsend.catholic.edu.au

Website: www.walsend.catholic.edu.au

2. Our Lady of Victories Primary School, Shortland

15 Lovell Parade, Shortland NSW 2307

PRINCIPAL: Mr David Treloar

Phone: (02) 49511003

Email: admin@shortland.catholic.edu.au

Website: www.shortland.catholic.edu.au

Weekend Masses:

St Patrick's Wallsend, 11 Macquarie St, Wallsend NSW 2287
Sunday - 9:30am, 5:30pm.

Our Lady of Victories, 262 Sandgate Rd, Shortland NSW 2307
Saturday - 5.30 pm (Vigil Mass) Sunday - 8:00am

Weekday Mass Times

Mon	7.00 pm St Patrick's Wallsend (Spiritual Retreat)
Tues	9.15 am St Patrick's Wallsend
Wed	7.30 am St Patrick's Wallsend
Thu	8.00 am OLV Shortland
Fri	9.00 am OLV Shortland
Sat	8:00 am St Patrick's Wallsend

Confessions: on Saturdays after 8.00 am Mass at St Patrick's Wallsend and from 5.00 - 5.20 pm before the Mass at OLV Shortland, and other times by appointment.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION - WALLSEND

St Patrick's Church is open daily from morning to evening for personal prayer. On Tuesdays, the Blessed Sacrament will be exposed for Adoration after the 9.15 am Mass until 6.00 pm, provided sufficient rostered adorers are available. Please check the Parish Newsletter or Parish Office for updates.

26TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
SUNDAY 27 SEPTEMBER 2026

Dear friends,

A father once handed his son the keys to the family business. Before leaving, he said, "I have spent my whole life building this. From today, I am trusting it to you. Take care of it, help it grow, and remember—it has been placed in your hands, but it does not belong to you alone." Years later, the father returned. The business had prospered, but the son had begun to behave as though everything belonged entirely to him. He had forgotten the most important thing: he was entrusted with a gift, not given absolute ownership. That simple distinction—between ownership and stewardship—takes us to the heart of this Sunday's Gospel.

Jesus tells the parable of a landowner who carefully establishes a vineyard. He plants it, protects it with a hedge, prepares a winepress and builds a tower. Then he entrusts it to tenants. When harvest time arrives, however, the tenants refuse to give the owner the fruits that rightly belong to him. They mistreat his servants and finally kill his son.

The tragedy is not that the tenants had nothing. They had been given everything necessary to produce a fruitful harvest. Their tragedy was that they forgot whose vineyard it was.

The vineyard is a powerful image for our own lives. Everything we possess is, ultimately, entrusted to us: our life, health, abilities, relationships, possessions, opportunities, faith, parish community and even the time we have on this earth. We are not absolute owners of these gifts. We are stewards. This changes the questions we ask.

Instead of asking only, "What do I want to do with my life?" faith invites us to ask, "Lord, what do you want my life to produce?" Instead of asking, "What can I get from my parish?" we might ask, "What fruit can I help our parish produce?" Instead of asking, "What belongs to me?" perhaps we should ask, "What has God entrusted to me for the good of others?"

Jesus says that the Kingdom will be given to a people who will produce its fruit. God desires fruit from the vineyard of our lives: compassion rather than indifference, forgiveness rather than resentment, generosity rather than selfishness, reconciliation rather than division, and service rather than self-interest.

There is also something deeply moving in the patience of the landowner. He sends servant after servant and finally his beloved son. God does not easily give up on his vineyard. Throughout our lives, he continues to speak, invite, challenge and call us back. Ultimately, he sends his Son—not to take life from us, but to lead us into its fullness.

Divine Mercy Parish too is a vineyard entrusted to us. Previous generations planted, sacrificed, prayed, built and handed the faith to us. Now the vineyard is in our hands. What will we hand to the generation that follows?

Perhaps that is the question to carry into this week: What fruit is God expecting from the vineyard he has entrusted to me?

May we never become possessors of God's gifts, but grateful stewards of them. And when the Lord comes looking for fruit, may he find our lives rich in faith, generosity, mercy and love.

Fr Paul Chackanikunnel

Divine Mercy Parish Wallsend-Shortland promotes safeguarding which involves the implementation of proactive, common sense and practical ideas that ensures the safety of children and vulnerable adults in our community.

Entrance Antiphon

Cf. Est 4: 17

Within your will, O Lord, all things are established, and there is none that can resist your will. For you have made all things, the heaven and the earth, and all that is held within the circle of heaven; you are the Lord of all.

First reading

Isaiah 5: 1-7

Against the Lord's vineyard.

Let me sing to my friend the song of his love for his vineyard. My friend had a vineyard on a fertile hillside. He dug the soil, cleared it of stones and planted choice vines in it. In the middle he built a tower, he dug a press there too. He expected it to yield grapes, but sour grapes were all that it gave. And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, I ask you to judge between my vineyard and me. What could I have done for my vineyard that I have not done? I expected it to yield grapes. Why did it yield sour grapes instead? Very well, I will tell you what I am going to do to my vineyard: I will take away its hedge for it to be grazed on, and knock down its wall for it to be trampled on. I will lay it waste, unpruned, undug; overgrown by the briar and the thorn. I will command the clouds to rain no rain on it. Yes, the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the House of Israel, and the men of Judah that chosen plant. He expected justice, but found bloodshed, integrity, but only a cry of distress.

The word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 24:4-9. R. v.6

(R.) The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel.

You brought a vine out of Egypt; to plant it you drove out the nations. It stretched out its branches to the sea, to the Great River it stretched out its shoots. (R.)

Then why have you broken down its walls? It is plucked by all who pass by. It is ravaged by the boar of the forest, devoured by the beasts of the field. (R.)

God of hosts, turn again, we implore, look down from heaven and see. Visit this vine and protect it, the vine your right hand has planted. (R.)

And we shall never forsake you again; give us life that we may call upon your name. God of hosts, bring us back; let your face shine on us and we shall be saved. (R.)

Second reading

Philippians 4: 6-9

If there is anything you need, pray for it.

There is no need to worry; but if there is anything you need, pray for it, asking God for it with prayer and thanksgiving, and that peace of God, which is so much greater than we can understand, will guard your hearts and your thoughts, in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers, fill your minds with everything that is true, everything that is noble, everything that is good and pure, everything that we love and honour, and everything that can be thought virtuous or worthy of praise. Keep doing all the things

that you learnt from me and have been taught by me and have heard or seen that I do. Then the God of peace will be with you.

The word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

John 15:15

Alleluia, alleluia!

I call you friends, says the Lord, because I have made known to you everything I have learnt from my father.

Alleluia!

Gospel

Matthew 21:28-32

This is the landlord's heir: come, let us kill him

Jesus said to the chief priests and the elders of the people, 'Listen to another parable. There was a man, a landowner, who planted a vineyard; he fenced it round, dug a winepress in it and built a tower; then he leased it to tenants and went abroad. When vintage time drew near he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his servants, thrashed one, killed another and stoned a third. Next he sent some more servants, this time a larger number, and they dealt with them in the same way. Finally he sent his son to them. "They will respect my son" he said. But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, "This is the heir. Come on, let us kill him and take over his inheritance." So they seized him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?' They answered, 'He will bring those wretches to a wretched end and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will deliver the produce to him when the season arrives.' Jesus said to them, 'Have you never read in the scriptures: It was the stone rejected by the builders that became the keystone. This was the Lord's doing and it is wonderful to see? 'I tell you, then, that the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit.'

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Communion Antiphon

Lam 3: 25

The Lord is good to those who hope in him, to the soul that seeks him.

Fundraising Appeal

St Patrick's Church Roof Repairs

Thank you to everyone who has already contributed towards the urgent repairs to the roof of St Patrick's Church, Wallsend.

Target: \$11,995.94

Amount remaining: \$4,980.94

Donations received (last week): \$300.00

(Previous weeks \$6,715)

Thank you for your generosity and faithful stewardship of our parish. Together, we can reach our goal!

Electronic Bank Transfer to the Parish

Parishioners and friends who wish to support Divine Mercy Parish through an electronic bank transfer may use the account details below.

(These bank details are for electronic transfers only and cannot be used for cash or cheque deposits at a Commonwealth Bank branch).

Bank: Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA)

BSB: 066-739 Account Number: 100003361

Account Name: Wallsend Shortland Church

Please note: Due to banking technicalities, the account name may not always appear as an exact match. You may still proceed with the transfer, provided the BSB and Account Number are entered correctly, as these details determine where the funds are transferred.

Thank you for your generous support of the mission and ministry of our parish.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

The First Commandment – Who Has First Place in My Life?

"I am the Lord your God...

You shall have no other gods before me." Exodus 20:2–3

If someone looked carefully at how we spend our time, energy, money and attention, what would they conclude is most important to us?

Most Catholics would immediately say, "God." Yet the First Commandment invites us to look deeper. It asks not simply whether we believe that God exists, but whether God truly has first place in our lives.

A Commandment Born from a Relationship

The First Commandment begins with an important declaration: "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery."

God first reminds Israel of what He has done for them. He rescued them, accompanied them and entered into covenant with them. Only then does He say, "You shall have no other gods before me."

Therefore, this Commandment is not the demand of a distant God seeking attention. It is the invitation of the God who has already loved and saved His people: Trust Me. Belong to Me. Do not give your heart to something that cannot save you.

What Does the First Commandment Ask of Us?

In Catholic understanding, the First Commandment calls us to faith, hope and love of God. We acknowledge God as our Creator and Lord, place our trust in Him, worship Him, pray to Him and seek to live according to His will.

Jesus expresses its heart clearly:

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." (Matthew 22:37)

God does not simply ask for a small religious corner of our lives. He desires to be at the centre, so that every other part of life finds its proper place around Him.

Do We Still Have Idols?

Ancient peoples often worshipped visible idols made of wood, stone or metal. We may assume that idolatry has little relevance today. But an idol is not necessarily a statue. Anything that takes the place that belongs to God can become an idol.

Money can become an idol when possessing more becomes our greatest security. Career can become an idol when achievement determines our worth. Technology can become an idol when it controls our attention and relationships. Popularity, possessions, pleasure, power, appearance—even another person—can gradually occupy the centre of our lives.

Even good things can become disordered when they become ultimate things.

The question is not whether we have money, ambitions, technology or possessions. The question is: Do we possess them, or have they begun to possess us?

Faith, Superstition and Trust

The First Commandment also challenges practices that replace genuine trust in God with attempts to control the future or manipulate spiritual powers. Catholic faith therefore rejects superstition, divination, fortune-telling, magic and occult practices.

Christian prayer is very different. Prayer does not attempt to control God. Prayer says, as Jesus did, "Your will be done." It places our lives confidently into the hands of the Father.

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

11 October 2026 — Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary time

1st Reading: Isaiah 25: 6-10; Psalm: Ps 22 (23).

2nd Reading: Philippians 4: 12-14, 19-20; Gospel: Matthew 22: 1-14.

This Commandment also invites us to examine our doubts and spiritual struggles. Having questions does not necessarily mean having no faith. Faith often grows through questioning. What matters is that we continue seeking God sincerely, praying, listening and remaining open to His truth.

What About Images and the Saints?

Catholics are sometimes asked whether statues, sacred images or devotion to the saints contradict the First Commandment.

Catholics worship God alone. We do not worship Mary, the saints, statues or relics. Sacred images remind us of Christ and members of His Body who have gone before us in faith. We honour the saints and ask their prayers, but adoration belongs to God alone. Everything authentically Catholic must ultimately lead us towards God, never replace Him.

Putting God First

The First Commandment is therefore not merely about avoiding false gods. It is an invitation to build our entire life around the one true God who loves us.

Perhaps this week we could examine ourselves honestly:

What receives the best of my time and attention?

Where do I look for my deepest security?

What am I most afraid of losing?

What influences my decisions most strongly?

Does my relationship with God shape the rest of my life?

Putting God first does not mean neglecting family, work, friendships or responsibilities. Quite the opposite. When God is truly first, He teaches us how to love everything else properly.

The First Commandment asks us to reorder our hearts.

Not simply: "Do I believe in God?"

But something much more personal: **Does the God I believe in truly have first place in my life?**

Parish News

1. A Brief Appeal for Our Parish

Dear friends,

I would like to share with you an urgent concern regarding our parish finances. Last Thursday, when I checked our operating account, year to date, the balance was very low, and at present it stands at only \$3,154.83.

To help you understand the significance of this, all our regular parish collections and other income are deposited into this operating account, and our day-to-day parish expenses are also paid from the same account. This means that the current balance represents the funds presently available to meet the ongoing operational needs of our parish.

It is simply not possible to sustain the day-to-day life of our parish with such a limited balance. We have regular expenses such as utilities, administration, liturgical needs, insurance premiums, cleaning, maintenance, and both minor and major repairs. As we all know from our own households, the cost of almost everything continues to rise.

Therefore, I come to you today with a sincere request to support our parish according to your means. I am also conscious that many