PARISH AND SHRINE OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

48-50 Princes Highway (PO Box 14) Unanderra NSW 2526

www.unanderraparish.org.au

www.facebook.com/Immaculate-Conception-Unanderra-Parish-102440924742769/

Parish Priest: **Fr Duane Fernandez**
Email: Duane.Fernandez@dow.org.au
Mobile: 0414 626 357

Assistant Priest: **Fr Joseph Vuong Nguyen**
Email: joseph.vuongnguyen@dow.org.au

Polish Chaplain: **Fr Jerzy Slowinski**
Email: slowinski54@gmail.com
Mobile: 0410 225 975

Parish Assistant: **Sr Kerry Gardiner**
Email: Kerry.Gardiner@sosj.org.au
Mobile: 0421 463 871

Parish Pastoral Council Chair: **Mr Chris Lyon**
Mobile: 0403 296 837

Parish School: **St Pius X Primary School**
Cnr Hargreaves & Cummins Streets
(PO Box 358) Unanderra NSW 2526
Phone:4271 3550 | Fax:4272 2954

School Principal: **Mrs Lisa Tyson**

Parish Secretary: **Mrs Melissa Bridges**
Office Hours: Mon/Wed: 8:30am - 1:30pm
Friday: 8:30am - 3:30pm

Parish Office: *Email: unanderra@dow.org.au*
Website: www.unanderraparish.org.au
Phone: 4271 1068

TWENTY FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (YEAR A) — 13 SEP 2026

Parish Vision - We are a diverse community united by our love for Jesus and for one another, constantly seeking to grow in this love especially through the Eucharist. We welcome everyone and help each other to discover their unique gifts, joyfully working together as one to bring the overflowing love of Jesus to all people.

Weekly Programme	**Immaculate Conception UNANDERRA**	**St Therese WEST WOLLONGONG**
Mon 14 Sep *The Exaltation of the Holy Cross*	Mass: 8am	
Tues 15 Sep *Our Lady of Sorrows*	**No Mass today**	
Wed 16 Sep *Sts Cornelius and Cyprian*		**No Mass today**
Thurs 17 Sep *St Hildegard of Bingen*	Mass: 5:30pm Reconciliation: 6pm - 6:50pm Rosary: 6pm Adoration: 6pm - 7pm	
Fri 18 Sep	***St Carlo Acutis relic 6:30pm - 8:30pm***	Mass: 7:45am
Sat 19 Sep	Mass: 5pm	Rosary: 8:30am Mass: 9am Reconciliation: 9:30am - 10:30am
Sun 20 Sep	Mass: 8am ***No Polish Mass***	Mass: 10am Mass: 5pm

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Recently Deceased
Ana Frkovic

Anniversaries
Bp Thomas McCabe, Jose Diaz, Michael Blewitt, Clare Nissen, Paul Blood, Antonio Carlotto

Prayers for the sick
Kathleen (Katie) Thomas, Peter Stevens, Rachael Wakeley Iris Brown, Mr Leandro, Steven Brown, Kevin Murphy, Peter Lathourakis, Antoinette Sakr, Lien Tran, George Hoyn, Noel Meddows, Quoc H Tran, Trace Lee Wood, Julie Connor, Paul Murphy.

COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARDING OUR CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE PEOPLE

For any suggestions or concerns about safeguarding our children and vulnerable people, please contact the Parish Office, or the Diocesan Office of Professional Standards and Safeguarding at ***safeguarding@dow.org.au*** or ***4222 2428.***

Message from Fr Duane

This weekend marks ***Safeguarding Sunday*** in the Catholic Church throughout Australia, concluding National Child Protection Week. I take this opportunity to share an update about many areas of practical progress that have occurred in this area in our parish and Diocese in recent years.

In late 2025, the ***Diocese of Wollongong was audited by Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd***, and our two parishes of West Wollongong and Unanderra were chosen among other parishes and agencies in the Diocese for interviews. The full audit report is available through this QR code; note that it focuses on the Diocese as a whole, but in their discussion with us they were very encouraging about the work that we are already doing, and also gave some good suggestions for continued improvement.

What have our own parishes been doing in this area? In 2023, a ***"Safeguarding Team"*** was established across the parishes of Unanderra and West Wollongong, composed of leaders of child-related ministries (Children's Liturgy of the Word and Altar server ministries) and other volunteers who responded to a bulletin notice requesting expressions of interest. Since then, the scope has extended to newly formed youth groups and events, and membership of the team has also expanded to include leaders of the ministry of Communion to the Sick and Housebound, prompted by a deeper awareness through last year's Audit that we must be proactive not only in safeguarding of children but also of vulnerable adults. I thank all of the volunteers of our Safeguarding Team during these past 3 years for their ongoing work behind the scenes to continually improve our safeguarding practices. Some of the progress undertaken and overseen by this team includes:

- the development of risk assessments for all child-related activities in the parish
- the development of sign-in registers for all altar servers, acolytes and clergy
- the development of a simple "sacristy checklist" for all involved in serving at Mass to ensure that every possible safeguard is in place both for children and all volunteers
- the development of a registration process for children and volunteers attending Children's Liturgy of the Word
- internal audits of parish compliance with Diocesan and government regulations, including Working with Children Checks and Police Checks wherever necessary for volunteers
- initiating and continuing to improve induction and Safeguarding training for volunteers as needed
- improved communication, including in the bulletin, for any feedback, suggestions or concerns about Safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults in our community.

The ***9th "Child Safe Standard"*** from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse is *"Review and Continuous Improvement"*. This standard should already be part of our "DNA" as Catholics, given that an essential part of our faith is to honestly and humbly reflect on our own sins and failings, not with discouragement or despair but with faith and hope in God's mercy and a commitment to always learn and grow, both as individuals and as a Church. I am deeply aware of the damage that has been caused in the past by trusted leaders in our Church, and renew my own commitment, together with Fr Joseph and all of our parish staff and leaders, to continue to work with all of you to review and improve our Safeguarding practices for all in our community, with special care for the most vulnerable.

Next Tuesday and Wednesday, there will be no Mass or Reconciliation at Unanderra or West Wollongong, due to a large number of First Reconciliations that Fr Joseph and I will be celebrating on those two evenings.

Fr Duane Fernandez

Message from Sr Kerry

As a community of three Josephites we were living in a very isolated town. The parish priest found his posting hard. It was a standard agreement that whenever he wanted to join us for a meal, he only had to ask for another potato to be put into the pot. In one conversation he said, *'If ever the sisters leave town, I will be the next car out of town.'*

Recently I viewed his funeral online. I felt sad. There was so much to this man that I am sure some things would never be known.

Have you ever thought of your eulogy? What would you want said? What would be important to mention? What message would you want your funeral to leave for those gathered to celebrate the gift you have been? Perhaps give a few quiet moments this week to ponder these questions. They can be quite revealing.

Sr Kerry Gardiner

ROSTER — THIS WEEKEND

September	**Church Washing**	Barbara Farraway	
Sat 12 Sept	**Church Cleaning**	F Fernandez, B Rice	
Sat 12 Sept	**Lawns**	*No lawn mowing this week.*	
	Lectors	**Welcomers**	**Children's liturgy**
5pm 12 Sept	M and C Carolan	V and C Davis	
8am 13 Sept	M Lyon	J Sharwood	Alexia Palma, Eleisha Benedetti
Counters	A Kelly, B Farraway		

ROSTER — NEXT WEEKEND

September	**Church Washing**	Barbara Farraway	
Sat 19 Sept	**Church Cleaning**	J Haywood, L Salway, M Hurley, T Vaafusuaga	
Sat 19 Sept	**Lawns**	*M & J Winner, M Walsh, S Corrigan, A Bennett, P Meers, T Davis.*	
	Lectors	**Welcomers**	**Children's liturgy**
5pm 19 Sept	L Davis	T Chicharo	
8am 20 Sept	A Kelly	A Browne, J Hoxha	Kelly Anderson, Miriam Byron, Molly Hertsch
Counters	A Kelly, B Farraway		

PARISH NEWS

Morning tea – Sunday 13 September 2026

Our hospitality team will be serving tea & coffee in the St Joseph's room after 8am Mass. Please join us for a cuppa and chat after Mass.

Safeguarding - Children's liturgy QR code registration

Please use this QR code to register your children for Children's Liturgy.

Thank you to volunteers afternoon tea – 2pm Sun 20 Sept

We have attempted to circulate invitations via email but if you are a volunteer and haven't received an emailed invitation, please come along – and please RSVP by Monday 14 Sept to the parish office to confirm your attendance. We are always so grateful to our many parish volunteers who give so much of themselves to keep our parish alive and growing!

Morning tea at Wests Illawarra café - 10:30am Mon 14 Sept.

Our next coffee catch-up will be 14 Sept at 10:30am. We hope to see you there.

Vinnies Winter Bucket Appeal – updated total

The Unanderra Conference of St Vincent de Paul Society would like to thank all the generous Parishioners who supported our Winter Bucket Appeal. A total of **$4,919.05** has been raised to date. Donations can still be made using the poor box in the church or by placing an envelope addressed to St Vincent De Paul Society Unanderra Conference in the Mass collection plate. All monies raised are used to support the poor of our parish. The Unanderra Conference receives on average more than ten requests for help every week. When you give to Vinnies you're helping our volunteers rebuild lives.

Revive Youth: 7pm Friday 18 Sept

Revive Youth invites all high school aged young people to come along to connect with each other and grow in faith together in a relaxed and fun environment. Come along and invite others to any or all of these evenings!
Contact ***reviveyouth25@gmail.com*** for more information.

Parish Survey

The Parish Pastoral Council invite your feedback about our Parish. You can participate using this QR code or by filling in the survey form at the side door of the church. The survey closes on Monday 5 Oct.

STIC Young Adults

7pm, 2nd & 4th Thurs of the month, St Therese Parish Centre. Message us on FB or Inst (@sticyoungadults) to join our WhatsApp for regular updates.

No Polish Masses while Fr Jerzy is on leave.

Fr Jerzy Slowinski will be on annual leave from 11 Sept to 11 October 2026. There will be no Polish Masses during this time.

Parish Finances - week ending 6 Sept 2026

$659	First Collection	*- Diocesan Clergy Remuneration Fund*
$468	Second collection	*- Parish expenses*
$436	Tap Point donations	
$373	Planned giving envelopes	
$539	Direct debits (weekly average from June).	

Direct debits can be contributed weekly, fortnightly or monthly

Sanctus Unanderra – Wed 16 Sept, 6:30pm to 7:30pm

Young adults Eucharistic Adoration and dinner afterwards at Unanderra Hotel. For inquiries email:
Arnie.hurdoyal@dow.org.au

THE JOURNEY
CATHOLIC RADIO PROGRAMME
– Airs Sunday 13 Sept 2026

On The Journey this Week: Fr Mike Delaney says today's Gospel asks what it will cost me to look at forgiveness differently. Mother Hilda says like the pilgrimage, the Camino, we too can walk for the sins of others. Bishop Tony Percy says no forgiveness means spiritual paralysis. Byron & Francine Pirola say miscarriage is a common but often silent loss and is a profound but often hidden form of grief. Listen at www.jcr.org.au

ST CARLO ACUTIS
– Relic and display

Mon 14 Sept to Mon 21 Sept
(now including Unanderra Parish)

Our diocese is excited to be hosting the International Carlo Acutis Major Relic Pilgrimage between 14-21 September 2026. The Eucharistic Miracles Exhibition will be on display in the St Francis Xavier's Cathedral from Friday 18 – Monday 21 September. ***Even more exciting: the relic of St Carlo will be present at Immaculate Conception Parish Unanderra on Friday 18th September, from 6:30pm to 8:30pm, with a special talk from an expert on St Carlo, a time of veneration of the relic, and Eucharistic Adoration. All are welcome!***
For more information go to: www.stcarloaustralia.com

FAITH AND FRIES
GRILL'D WOLLONGONG

Wednesday 23 September, 4:30pm to 6:30pm

Calling all high school students! Faith & Fries is a relaxed afternoon bringing together teenagers from across the Diocese of Wollongong for good food, new friendships and honest conversations about faith and life.
Grab dinner at Grill'd, hear a real-life faith story and join a live Q&A panel where no question is off limits. Whether you're involved in your faith, just curious or somewhere in between, you're welcome!
Free to attend, with a special $15 burger and chips deal available to purchase. Bring your mates, youth group or others from your school. Register by 12 Sept to go into the draw for our giveaway!
Register: dow.sh/fries

RENEWED AND SENT

Parish Renewal Summit
Sunday 1-3 October 2026

Bishop Brian Mascord invites you to the Renewed & Sent Parish Renewal Summit, to be held at St Gregory's College, Campbelltown, from 1–3 October 2026.

Join clergy, religious, lay leaders, ministry volunteers and parishioners from across the Diocese of Wollongong for three days of inspiring keynote presentations, practical workshops, prayer, and opportunities to connect with others who share a passion for the future of our parishes.
Registration at: renewedandsent.com.au.

VOCARIS YOUTH (Yrs 7 to 12)

Saturday 31 October 2026, 10am to 3pm
Wilton Community Centre

Do you have a high school-aged young person who you would love to see grow in their faith, discover the beauty of the Catholic faith and make like-minded friends? Then they won't want to miss VOCARIS Youth – a free, fun and faith-filled day for students in Years 7-12. featuring a Cookie Station, Sausage Sizzle Lunch and Ice Cream Topping Bar!
For information or to register go to: dow.sh/VocarisYouth.

13 SEPTEMBER – TWENTY FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (YEAR A)

First Reading – Ecclesiasticus 27:33-28:9 ***Forgive your neighbour's faults and when you pray, your sins will be forgiven***

Resentment and anger, these are foul things, and both are found with the sinner.
He who exacts vengeance will experience the vengeance of the Lord, who keeps strict account of sin.
Forgive your neighbour the hurt he does you, and when you pray, your sins will be forgiven.
If a man nurses anger against another, can he then demand compassion from the Lord?
Showing no pity for a man like himself, can he then plead for his own sins?
Mere creature of flesh, he cherishes resentment; who will forgive him his sins?
Remember the last things, and stop hating, remember dissolution and death, and live by the commandments.
Remember the commandments, and do not bear your neighbour ill-will;
remember the covenant of the Most High, and overlook the offence.

Responsorial Psalm – The Lord is kind and merciful: slow to anger, and rich in compassion.

1. My soul, give thanks to the Lord
all my being, bless his holy name.
My soul, give thanks to the Lord
and never forget all his blessings. **R.**
2. It is he who forgives all your guilt,
who heals every one of your ills,
who redeems your life from the grave,
who crowns you with love and compassion. **R.**
3. His wrath will come to an end;
he will not be angry for ever.
He does not treat us according to our sins
nor repay us according to our faults. **R.**
4. For as the heavens are high above the earth
so strong is his love for those who fear him.
As far as the east is from the west
so far does he remove our sins. **R.**

Second Reading - Romans 14:21-35 ***Whether alive or dead, we belong to the Lord.***

The life and death of each of us has its influence on others; if we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord, so that alive or dead we belong to the Lord. This explains why Christ both died and came to life: it was so that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia! I give you a new commandment: love one another as I have loved you. Alleluia!

Gospel - Matthew 18:21-35 ***I tell you that you forgive not seven times but seventy times seven.***

Peter went up to Jesus and said, 'Lord, how often must I forgive my brother if he wrongs me? As often as seven times?' Jesus answered, 'Not seven, I tell you, but seventy-seven times.
'And so the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who decided to settle his accounts with his servants. When the reckoning began, they brought him a man who owed ten thousand talents; but he had no means of paying, so his master gave orders that he should be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, to meet the debt. At this, the servant threw himself down at his master's feet. "Give me time" he said "and I will pay the whole sum." And the servant's master felt so sorry for him that he let him go and cancelled the debt. Now as this servant went out, he happened to meet a fellow servant who owed him one hundred denarii; and he seized him by the throat and began to throttle him. "Pay what you owe me" he said. His fellow servant fell at his feet and implored him, saying, "Give me time and I will pay you." But the other would not agree; on the contrary, he had him thrown into prison till he should pay the debt. His fellow servants were deeply distressed when they saw what had happened, and they went to their master and reported the whole affair to him. Then the master sent for him. "You wicked servant," he said "I cancelled all that debt of yours when you appealed to me. Were you not bound, then, to have pity on your fellow servant just as I had pity on you?" And in his anger the master handed him over to the torturers till he should pay all his debt. And that is how my heavenly Father will deal with you unless you each forgive your brother from your heart.'