

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/



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Polish Chaplain: Fr Jerzy Slowinski
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Parish Assistant: Sr Kerry Gardiner
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Parish Pastoral Council President:
 Email:
 Mobile:

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 Pauline Chrostowski

Parish Secretary: Mrs Melissa Bridges (Mon/Wed/Fri)

Parish Office: Email: unanderra@dow.org.au
 Website: www.unanderraparish.org.au
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THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (YEAR B) – 17 DECEMBER 2023

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 18 Dec	Mass: 7am	
Tues 19 Dec	Mass: 5:30pm Rosary: 6pm Adoration: 6pm - 7pm	Mass: 7:45am
Wed 20 Dec	Mass: 7am	Adoration: 4:30pm Reconciliation: 4:30pm - 5:15pm Mass: 5:30pm
Thurs 21 Dec <i>St Peter Canisius, priest, doctor</i>	Mass: 5:30pm Adoration: 6pm - 7pm Reconciliation: 6pm - 7pm	Mass: 7:45am
Fri 22 Dec	Mass: 7am	Mass: 9:30am
Sat 23 Dec <i>St John of Kanty, priest</i>	Rosary 7am Mass: 7:30pm Reconciliation: 5pm - 5:30pm Mass: 6pm	Rosary: 8:30am Mass: 9am
Sun 24 Dec	Mass: 8am Mass: 10am (Polish) Mass: 6pm (Christmas Vigil) Mass: 8pm (Christmas Vigil) Mass: 10pm (Polish)	Mass: 10am Mass: 5pm

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Recently Deceased

Vicki Maree Brown, John Sweeney
 Vincenza Carnevale, Serafin Gonzalo

Prayers for the sick

Jan Luke, Peter Lathourakis, Peter Stoyles, Antoinette Sakr
 Kerrie Maidment, Roger Baxendale, Josephine Moran

Anniversaries

Bruce Reedy, Neta Brown,
 Colleen Walter



PARISH OFFICE HOURS

unanderra@dow.org.au / 4271 1068

Monday: 8:30am-3:30pm

Tuesday: Closed

Wednesday: 8:30am-3:30pm

Thursday: Closed

Friday: 8:30am-3pm

Message from Fr Duane

This Sunday evening after the 5pm Mass at St Therese Parish I will be meeting with a group of adults who are interested in becoming Catholic. This will include people connected with both parishes of Unanderra and West Wollongong. If you or anyone you know might be interested, this would be a great time to begin the journey so feel free to come along (we will have a table during the usual parish refreshments in the Parish Centre from about 6pm). If anyone is interested but unable to make this time, please make contact with me as soon as possible and I can guide you in possible next steps.

Thank you once again for the ongoing generosity from so many in relation to the **Christmas Day lunch**. For those who aren't aware, this is a joint initiative of both Unanderra and West Wollongong parishes providing food, company and Christmas festivities at the Parish Centre at 12pm on Christmas Day. It is well and truly taking shape with an incredibly generous response from volunteers, and many people already giving their RSVP to attend. We would love to spread the invitation far and wide to anyone who would benefit from this, so if you or anyone you know might be interested in coming along please RSVP by Monday 18th December for catering and logistical purposes to unanderra@dow.org.au.

We congratulate Sarah Walsh, a faithful young parishioner for being accepted into Youth Mission Team next year, and wish her every blessing. These young adults commit themselves to a year of ministry with high school aged children, and depend on donations throughout their year of ministry. If you would like to support Sarah financially, you can donate cash in the donation box for Sarah's YMT year. Alternatively if you would like to donate electronically, or on a regular basis, you can see Sarah after Mass or contact her to find out more information at walsh.sarah2002@gmail.com.

Let us keep our seminarian Darren McDowell in our prayers, after the recent loss of his mother Ann. May she rest in eternal peace and may Darren and his family find comfort and strength at this time. Ann's funeral will take place on Wednesday 20th December, 11am at Regina Coeli Catholic Church, Beverly Hills.

I encourage you all to avail yourselves of the beautiful Sacrament of Reconciliation during this Advent season. It doesn't matter how long it has been – the priest can guide you through the Sacrament. I will provide an extended period of Reconciliation on Saturday 23rd December, 9:30am to 11:30am at St Therese Church, West Wollongong, in addition to the usual Reconciliation times listed in the bulletin.

Fr Duane Fernandez

Message from Sr Kerry

Today we give thanks: thanks for the gift of Fr Duane as he celebrates the 12th anniversary of his Ordination.

Let's pray that his heart and soul may always be youthful; his hands continue to bring comfort, strength, peace and healing; may he always know that others rejoice and celebrate the gift he is. We are blessed because of his 'Yes' to the call of his God. We give thanks!



Sr Kerry Gardiner

ROSTER – THIS WEEKEND

December	Church Washing	Helen Murphy	
Sat 16 Dec	Church Cleaning	W & J Rodgers, J Andersson	
Sat 16 Dec	Lawns	<i>No lawn mowing this week</i>	
	Lectors	Welcomers	Children's liturgy
6pm 16 Dec	Tina Chicharo	S Marsala	
8am 17 Dec	S Walsh	F Carolan/ A Amone	Sarah Walsh, Alicia Sanchez-Levine
Counters	A Gunning, M Caudero, C Garrett		

ROSTER – NEXT WEEKEND

December	Church Washing	Helen Murphy	
Sat 23 Dec	Church Cleaning	F Fernandez, B Rice, R Tassone	
Sat 23 Dec	Lawns	M & J Winner, S Carrigan, A Bennett	
	Lectors	Welcomers	Children's liturgy
6pm 23 Dec	D Ferrer		
8am 24 Dec	M Matos	A Kelly / M Graham	<i>School Holidays</i>
Counters	A Kelly, B Faraway		

PARISH NEWS

Christmas Mass times, lectors and welcomers

Christmas Eve - 6pm - Natasha O'Donoghue and Daisy Ferrier

Christmas Eve - 8pm - Telesia Vaafusuaga

Christmas Day - 8am Didi Browne

Welcomers

Christmas Eve - 6pm - Sr Kerry Gardiner

Christmas Eve - 8pm - Barbara Faraway

Christmas Day - 8am - **Volunteer needed**



St Vincent De Paul Giving Tree

Please place your gifts under the Giving Tree **by Sunday 17 December** as hampers and toys will be delivered on Tuesday 19 December. A big thank you to all the generous parishioners who have supported the Vinnies Giving Tree for many years.



Vinnies Christmas Cards and Columban calendars

Christmas Cards and the Columban Calendars are available. *Christmas cards are \$5/pack of ten and the 2024 Columban calendar is \$10.*

Vinnies Christmas Appeal

The only collection at all Christmas Masses will go to the Vinnies Christmas Appeal. Envelopes will be available for those wishing to make a card payment or require a receipt. All money raised will go to St Vincent de Paul Unanderra Conference.

Thank you from CWL

Many thanks to all those who helped with the celebration for our Parish Feast day. It was a lovely night and everyone enjoyed the food and the time to have a chat with fellow parishioners.

Thank you to all who supported our Christmas Raffle. Our charities will certainly benefit from your generosity.

Congratulations to all those who won a prize - *Tom Mayberry, Theresa, Rena, Helen Murphy, John Bourke, Bernadette Ihaid, Mary Louise Wyatt, Sister Kerry, Marie Skylas, Peter Piper and Pat Cundy*. The CWL wishes all parishioners a Happy and Blessed Christmas and Peace and Joy in 2024.



Used stamps for Peru

On behalf of Mary Mackillop Today, I thank you for your generous support in supplying and assisting with used stamps. We've had another wonderful year, raising approximately \$33,600. A great effort from many, many people.

From 2001 till now the **total raised is \$519,650**. There was great excitement as we exceeded the half of a million dollars! Well done all! It is through your efforts that the legacy of Saint Mary Mackillop continues in Peru today.

Sr Helen Saunders - For Sisters of St Joseph.

Advent & Christmas Daily reflections

The Sign: Daily Advent and Christmas Reflections available now. **Cost is \$3**. Please leave money in the small drawer.

Parish Finances - week ending 10 December 2023

\$567 First Collection - Clergy Remuneration Fund

\$591 Second collection - Parish expenses

\$300 Tap Point - Parish donations

\$649 Planned giving envelopes

\$534 Direct debits (weekly average from November).

Direct debits can be contributed weekly, fortnightly or monthly

Christmas lunch at the St Therese Parish Centre.

We will be offering Christmas lunch at the St Therese Parish Centre. If you would like to join us, please contact Melissa at the Parish Office unanderra@dow.org.au

Christmas Carols at Edmund Rice College - Monday 18 Dec

You are invited to a BYO picnic (from 5pm), carol singing (7pm) and supper (8pm) at Edmund Rice College, please use Mt Keira Rd gate, on Monday 18 Dec. Families, friends and individuals all most welcome. For further details please call **Fiona 0413121383**.

THE JOURNEY CATHOLIC RADIO PROGRAMME

– AIRS SUNDAY 17 DECEMBER 2023

On the Journey this week: Fr William Loh asks: have you ever felt like someone crying out in a spiritual wilderness? Mother Hilda has a prayer tip that will put love into the world right now. Plus, Fr Tony Percy says we have this magnificent question put to John, "Who are you?" in today's Gospel, and that's a question for us too. Darren McDowell has an Advent reflection on searching for happiness, and Pete Gilmore ponders who is in the manger. Plus, more great music!

Listen at jcr.org.au



PURPOSE PILGRIMAGE OF MERCY 11 – 21 JUNE 2024

Father Christopher Sarkis, Parish Priest of Rosemeadow, will be the Chaplain accompanying Harvest Journeys Eastern Europe Pilgrimage of Mercy in June 2024, visiting Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic. It includes the Shrines of Divine Mercy, the Black Madonna of Czestochowa and the Infant of Prague. It visits places of importance to St John Paul II, St. Faustina and St. Maximillian Kolbe, among others.

Optional Extension: There is also an optional 6 night/7-day extension (21 – 27 June) to Bavaria and Austria. It will include the Marian Shrine of Altotting, as well as Markt I in Bavaria; Salzburg of the Sound of Music fame and the hometown of Mozart; and the historic, cultural, and artistic city of Vienna in Austria. We will also visit various other shrines and attractions along with some spectacular churches and monasteries.

Enquiries: 4628 1385 or directly at harvestjourneys.com/tour/pilgrimageof-mercy
Bookings only through Harvest Journeys.

SUMMER SCHOOL OF EVANGELISATION (SYDNEY): 7-14 JANUARY 2024, MOUNT CARMEL RETREAT CENTRE, VARROVILLE

Summer School is a week-long, live-in, life-changing retreat featuring praise and worship, inspiring talks, engaging liturgy, time to chill & learn and more in the midst of a community of 150+ young people aged 16-35. Register by 30th November to receive early bird rates (concession \$525/adult \$625).

Bookings: summerschool.org.au

CCD ADMIN AND SUPPORT OFFICER CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF WOLLONGONG

Suitably experienced and qualified persons are encouraged to apply for this position. Appropriate skills and a passion for the work of SRE Catechists in State schools is essential. Applications close on **Wednesday, 10 January 2024**.

For more information and a detailed role description, please go to: <https://dow/sh/ccdadminpv>

For enquiries contact helen.bennett@dow.org.au

DIOCESAN YOUTH MINISTRY LEADER

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF WOLLONGONG

Suitably experienced and qualified persons are encouraged to apply for the role of Youth Ministry Leader in the Diocese of Wollongong.

Applications close on **Tuesday, 12 January 2024**.

For more information and a detailed role description, please go to: dow.org.au/position-vacant-diocesan-youth-ministry-leader/ or for enquiries contact helen.bennett@dow.org.au

17 DECEMBER - THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (YEAR B)

First Reading - Isaiah 61:1-2, 10-11 *I exult for joy in the Lord.*

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for the Lord has anointed me.
He has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to bind up hearts that are broken;
to proclaim liberty to captives, freedom to those in prison;
to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord.
'I exult for joy in the Lord, my soul rejoices in my God,
for he has clothed me in the garments of salvation,
he has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity,
like a bridegroom wearing his wreath, like a bride adorned in her jewels.
'For as the earth makes fresh things grow, as a garden makes seeds spring up,
so will the Lord make both integrity and praise spring up in the sight of the nations.'

Responsorial Psalm - My soul rejoices in my God.

1. My soul glorifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.
He looks on his servant in her nothingness;
henceforth all ages will call me blessed. R.
2. The Almighty works marvels for me. Holy his name!
His mercy is from age to age, on those who fear him. R.
3. He fills the starving with good things, sends the rich away empty.
He protects Israel, his servant, remembering his mercy. R.

Second Reading - 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 *May you all be kept blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Be happy at all times; pray constantly; and for all things give thanks to God, because this is what God expects you to do in Christ Jesus.

Never try to suppress the Spirit or treat the gift of prophecy with contempt; think before you do anything – hold on to what is good and avoid every form of evil.

May the God of peace make you perfect and holy; and may you all be kept safe and blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has called you and he will not fail you.

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia! The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he sent me to bring the Good News to the poor. Alleluia!

Gospel - John 1:6-8, 19-28

There stands among you, the one who is coming after me.

A man came, sent by God.
His name was John.
He came as a witness,
as a witness to speak for the light,
so that everyone might believe through him.
He was not the light,
only a witness to speak for the light.

This is how John appeared as a witness. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' he not only declared, but he declared quite openly, 'I am not the Christ.' 'Well then,' they asked 'are you Elijah?' 'I am not' he said. 'Are you the Prophet?' He answered, 'No.' So they said to him, 'Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who sent us. What have you to say about yourself?' So John said, 'I am, as Isaiah prophesied:

a voice that cries in the wilderness:
Make a straight way for the Lord.'

Now these men had been sent by the Pharisees, and they put this further question to him, 'Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the prophet?' John replied, 'I baptise with water; but there stands among you – unknown to you – the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his sandal-strap.' This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptising.