

# PARISH AND SHRINE OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

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

[www.unanderraparish.org.au](http://www.unanderraparish.org.au)

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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](mailto:unanderra@dow.org.au)  
 Website: [www.unanderraparish.org.au](http://www.unanderraparish.org.au)  
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## FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (YEAR B) – 24 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
<b>Mon 25 Dec</b>	Mass: 8am (Christmas Day) Mass: 10am (Polish Mass)	Mass: 10am (Christmas Day)
<b>Tues 26 Dec</b> <i>St Stephen, the first martyr</i>	Mass: 10am (Polish) Mass: 5:30pm Rosary: 6pm Adoration: 6pm - 7pm 	Mass: <b>No Mass today</b>
<b>Wed 27 Dec</b> <i>St John, apostle, evangelist</i>	Mass: 7am	Adoration: 4:30pm Reconciliation: 4:30pm - 5:15pm Mass: 5:30pm 
<b>Thurs 28 Dec</b> <i>The Holy Innocents</i>	Mass: 5:30pm Adoration: 6pm - 7pm Reconciliation: 6pm - 7pm 	Mass: 7:45am
<b>Fri 29 Dec</b> <i>St Thomas Becket, bishop, martyr</i>	Mass: 7am	Mass: 9:30am
<b>Sat 30 Dec</b>	Rosary 7am Mass: 7:30am Reconciliation: 5pm - 5:30pm Mass: 6pm 	Rosary: 8:30am Mass: 9am 
<b>Sun 31 Dec</b> <i>The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph</i>	Mass: 8am Mass: 10am (Polish)	Mass: 10am Mass: 5pm

### PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

#### Recently Deceased

Vicki Maree Brown, John Sweeney  
 Vincenza Carnevale, Serafin Gonzalo

#### Anniversaries

Colleen Walter, Nicholas Bruton,  
 Molly Rowe, Maurice Connell, Yvonne Treuen,  
 Mary Potts, Lucy Dalton, Jack Miller

#### Prayers for the sick

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



### PARISH OFFICE HOURS

[unanderra@dow.org.au](mailto: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*

Welcome to the shortest possible 4th “week” of Advent (concluding the shortest possible season of Advent). Thank you to all who have been generously sharing your time and gifts in so many ways in preparing for our Christmas celebrations, from decorating the church and liturgical preparation and ministries, to the work of St Vincent De Paul Society supported by the parishioners in bringing Christmas hampers to those most in need, to the wonderful generosity of so many towards the Christmas Day Lunch.

As tempting as it is (and necessary in some ways) to focus on Christmas already, let’s make an extra effort to find some quiet time for reflection during this weekend. It is in the quiet times of prayer that we can prepare our hearts for the true joy of Christmas – a joy that can be experienced no matter what our circumstances might be, as we thank God for giving us such a wonderful Saviour! In the words of the Second Preface of Advent:

*“It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Christ our Lord.*

*For all the oracles of the prophets foretold him,  
the Virgin Mother longed for him with love beyond all telling,  
John the Baptist sang of his coming and proclaimed his presence when he came.*

*It is by his gift that already we rejoice at the mystery of his Nativity,  
so that he may find us watchful in prayer  
and exultant in his praise.”*

**Fr Duane Fernandez**

## *Message from Sr Kerry*

There is a picture in circulation of Jesus in the rubble in Bethlehem. Some churches in the Middle East are cancelling the celebration of Christmas. It can be easy for us to think this is on the other side of the world. This comes from a country at war. Don’t be fooled! Let’s look closely into our hearts. What rubble is there that buries Jesus? What wars are taking place within me? What creates conflict within me? How do I respond?

Let’s be challenged by the scene of Jesus in the rubble. Bit by bit are you able to remove a stone from the rubble of your heart so that peace may enter your world? If so, Jesus will truly be born into our hearts and the hearts of others.



**Sr Kerry Gardiner**

### ROSTER — THIS 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	School Holidays
Counters	A Kelly, B Farraway		

### ROSTER — NEXT WEEKEND

December	Church Washing	Helen Murphy	
Sat 30 Dec	Church Cleaning	J Haywood, L Salway, M Hurley, T Vaafusuaga	
Sat 30 Dec	Lawns	No lawn mowing this week	
	Lectors	Welcomers	Children’s liturgy
6pm 30 Dec	D Nugent		
8am 31 Dec	P Gunning	M Matos	School Holidays
Counters	M Murphy(FT), S Alessi		

## 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 - Maria Matos



### 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.



### 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.*



### Parish Finances - week ending 17 December 2023

\$610	First Collection	- Clergy Remuneration Fund
\$668	Second collection	- Parish expenses
\$300	Tap Point - Parish donations	
\$326	Planned giving envelopes	
\$534	Direct debits (weekly average from November).	

Direct debits can be contributed weekly, fortnightly or monthly

### Recycling bins

Your donations of 10c recyclable bottles, cans and plastics are welcome. All proceeds go to the Parish.



### RCIA

It is exciting to have a number of people expressing their desire to become Catholic through the RCIA program. The first step will be for Fr Duane to meet with each one during the coming weeks. If you're interested or would like more information please let Fr Duane know either after Mass or at [duane.fernandez@dow.org.au](mailto:duane.fernandez@dow.org.au)

## SOCIAL JUSTICE POINTS

A mature exercise of the sensus fidei requires not only reception of Baptism but a life lived in authentic discipleship that develops the grace of Baptism. This enables us to distinguish the action of the Spirit from merely dominant forms of thinking or cultural conditioning, or from matters inconsistent with the Gospel. Understanding the exercise of the sensus fidei is to be deepened with appropriate theological reflection.

-- 'XVI ORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS' (Synod on Synodality) Synthesis Report.

## A VOCATION VIEW

Mary was called to be open to the extraordinary. What do you need to say "let it be" in response to God's call to you? Trust that the Lord is with you and will guide you always. (Luke 1:26-38)

If you want to talk about your vocation, please contact the diocesan vocations director, Fr Duane Fernandez at [vocations@dow.org.au](mailto:vocations@dow.org.au)



## THE JOURNEY CATHOLIC RADIO PROGRAMME - AIRS SUNDAY 24 DECEMBER 2023

On the Journey this week: Fr Joshua Whitehead says Christmas Eve is a time of preparation, joy, and primarily it's a time of anticipation. Mother Hilda says when you utter the words, Happy Christmas, pray swiftly in your heart for that person; "May you know that he came for you." Fr Tony Percy says faith gives us a great light to see God, but also to see ourselves and to see others in the human condition. Fr Sean Cullen says Christmas is radiant light, like a new sunrise.

Listen at [jcr.org.au](http://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 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](http://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.

Bookings: [summerschool.org.au](http://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](mailto: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/](http://dow.org.au/position-vacant-diocesan-youth-ministry-leader/) or for enquiries contact [helen.bennett@dow.org.au](mailto:helen.bennett@dow.org.au)

## 24 DECEMBER - FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (YEAR B)

### First Reading - 2 Samuel 7:1-5,8-12,14,16 *The kingdom of David will be established forever in the sight of the Lord.*

Once David had settled into his house and the Lord had given him rest from all the enemies surrounding him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, 'Look, I am living in a house of cedar while the ark of God dwells in a tent.' Nathan said to the king, 'Go and do all that is in your mind, for the Lord is with you.'

But that very night the word of the Lord came to Nathan:

'Go and tell my servant David, "Thus the Lord speaks: Are you the man to build me a house to dwell in? I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be leader of my people Israel; I have been with you on all your expeditions; I have cut off all your enemies before you. I will give you fame as great as the fame of the greatest on earth. I will provide a place for my people Israel; I will plant them there and they shall dwell in that place and never be disturbed again; nor shall the wicked continue to oppress them as they did, in the days when I appointed judges over my people Israel; I will give them rest from all their enemies. The Lord will make you great; the Lord will make you a House. And when your days are ended and you are laid to rest with your ancestors, I will preserve the offspring of your body after you and make his sovereignty secure. I will be a father to him and he a son to me; if he does evil, I will punish him with the rod such as men use, with strokes such as mankind gives. Your House and your sovereignty will always stand secure before me and your throne be established for ever.'"

### Responsorial Psalm - Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

1. I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord;  
through all ages my mouth will proclaim your truth.  
Of this I am sure, that your love lasts for ever,  
that your truth is firmly established as the heavens. R.
2. 'I have made a covenant with my chosen one;  
I have sworn to David my servant:  
I will establish your dynasty for ever  
and set up your throne through all ages. R.
3. 'He will say to me: "You are my father,  
my God, the rock who saves me."  
I will keep my love for him always;  
with him my covenant shall last.' R.

### Second Reading - Romans 16:25-27 *The mystery kept secret for endless ages is now revealed.*

Glory to him who is able to give you the strength to live according to the Good News I preach, and in which I proclaim Jesus Christ, the revelation of a mystery kept secret for endless ages, but now so clear that it must be broadcast to pagans everywhere to bring them to the obedience of faith. This is only what scripture has predicted, and it is all part of the way the eternal God wants things to be. He alone is wisdom; give glory therefore to him through Jesus Christ for ever and ever. Amen.

### Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia! I am the servant of the Lord: may his will for me be done. Alleluia!

### Gospel - Luke 1:26-38

#### *You will conceive and bear a son.*

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?' 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you' the angel answered 'and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.' 'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary 'let what you have said be done to me.' And the angel left her.