



PARISH AND SHRINE OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION UNANDERRA



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Parish website: www.unanderraparish.org.au

PROGRAMME FOR THIS WEEK

Monday	Dec 4	Mass: 7:00am (St JOHN DAMASCENE)
Tuesday	Dec 5	Adoration: 4:30pm-5:30pm Mass: 5:30pm
Wednesday	Dec 6	Mass: 7:00am (St NICHOLAS)
Thursday	Dec 7	Adoration: 4:30pm-5:30pm SAINT AMBROSE (Reconciliation available) Mass: 5:30pm
Friday	Dec 8	SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION Masses: 9:30am (School) 11:00am Polish Mass followed by Adoration 12noon-1pm 7:30pm followed by drinks and supper
Saturday	Dec 9	Mass: 7:30am Reconciliation 5:00-5:30pm Vigil Mass: 6:00pm
Sunday	Dec 10	SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT (Year B) Masses: 7:00am, 9:00am 10:45am (Polish)

1st SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR B

3rd DECEMBER 2017

READINGS: Is 63:16-17, 64:1, 3-8; 1 Cor 1:3-9;
Mk 13:33-37

The prophet recalls God's past goodness to His people, and pleads with Him to save them from their present sinfulness (FIRST READING).

As we wait the coming of Christ in glory at the end of time, the Holy Spirit keeps us steadfast in bearing witness to Him (SECOND READING). We need to stay awake at our appointed tasks, because we do not know the hour when Jesus, our Master, will return (GOSPEL).



PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Roy CATTANACH (recently deceased)
Andrew JAGMOC (anniversary)
Fortunata and Rodrigo FAELNAR (anniversary)
Ellen WALSH (anniversary)
Marino Battista
Rosa Battista
Maria EVANGELISTA
Renato ANGELINI
Francesco POMPEI
Deceased members of the ZANETTI, Da PRA, and
De MICHIEL families

Rosters of next weekend

Sat 9 th	Church Cleaning	F Fernandez, B Rice, S Markocic	
	Lawns	J Lonard, H & J Yates, F Timpano	
	Acolytes	Lectors	Welcomers
Vigil 6pm	P Jones	C Nughes	D Gelfius
Sun 10 th 7am	M Walsh	C Walsh	Walsh Family
9am	N Dwyer	R Green	V Cleary, M Mohr-Peters
Counters	A Gunning, M Cauduro, C Garrett, D Gringeri		
Children's Liturgy	C Hailstone, L Galea		

PARISH ACTIVITIES

Catholic Women's League: 2nd Thursday of the month, 10.30am

St Joseph's room. New members welcome.

Contact: Barbara 42711584 or Margaret 42715804

St. Vincent de Paul Conference: Tues, 7.30pm St. Joseph's room

Parish Pastoral Council: 2nd Monday of the month, 7:30pm

St Joseph's room

Nursing Home Masses

Hillside Nursing Home: 1st Tuesday of the month, 2pm

Figtree Nursing Home: 2nd Tuesday of the month, 10:45am

Villa Maria Nursing Home: 3rd Tuesday of the month, 9:30am

Refreshments after the 9am Mass on 1st weekend of the month.



ST VINCENT DE PAUL GIVING TREE

The church "Giving Tree" will start operating from this weekend (1st Sunday of Advent).

There will be tags on the Christmas Tree for Christmas food and children toys, these gifts need to be returned by 17th Dec(3rd Sunday of Advent) with the tag attached. Hampers and toys will be distributed on Tuesday 19th December.

Unanderra St Vincent de Paul Society supports on average 40 local family and 8 single people with Christmas hampers and toys for the children.

STAMPS FOR PERU

THANK YOU to all those who have contributed their used stamps to assist the Sisters of St Joseph Mission in Peru. This year the Parish has given 2kg of stamps (quite a lot of stamps). Don't forget to save the stamps from your Christmas cards and put them in the box at the side door of the Church. Every little helps.

Gospel Reflection

It is said that while there is life
there is hope.

This has an even deeper meaning in
reverse:

while there is hope there is life.

Hope is strength.

Hope sheds light onto despairing hearts.

It inspires the will to live.

It is the doctor's most powerful ally.

It is a shield against defeat and failure.

It revives ideals and renews dreams.

As long as there is hope,

no situation is impossible.

Advent summons us to wait in joyful
hope

for the coming of our Saviour,
Jesus Christ.

In the final analysis, He is our hope.



ST VINCENT DE PAUL

CHRISTMAS CARD AND COLUMBAN CALENDAR

The Unanderra St Vincent de Paul Conference members will be selling Christmas Cards and the Columban Calendar after each Mass.

Christmas Cards are \$6.00 (pack of 10) and the Columban Calendar is \$9.00.



Catholic Women's League Christmas Raffle

This week (2nd/3rd) and next weekend (9th/10th December) the CWL will be selling tickets for their Christmas Raffle. There will be 3 great prizes.

Tickets are \$2 each or 3 for \$5.

Raffle will be drawn after 9am Mass on 10th December.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR CHRISTMAS MASSES

Acolytes, Lectors and Welcomers are now needed for the Christmas Masses. If you are able to assist please write your name on the sheet in the centre aisle of the Church.

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

Same as Sunday: Vigil 6pm Sunday, December 24

7:00am, 9:00am, 10:45am (Polish) Monday, December 25



"God's ways are most mysterious"

St. Mary of the Cross 1883

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC YOUTH FESTIVAL MASS,

6:30pm Saturday 9 December, The Domain, Sydney

The biggest Catholic youth event in this country since World Youth Day in 2008 is fast approaching. The Australian Catholic Youth Festival will finish with a Mass for all participants in The Domain in Sydney. An invitation has also been extended to all surround diocese to attend. There is no age restriction on the final Mass, and it is hope that as many faithful as possible will attend this truly spectacular celebration of our Catholic Faith.

For more information go to: www.acyf.org.au

CATHOLICCARE'S Foster Care Program is urgently looking for two separate forever homes. Jenna*, 13, is an outgoing girl who plays netball and enjoys bike riding. She has a mild disability and attends a support unit in a mainstream school. Alice*, 7, is a happy and social girl who loves learning. Both girls need homes with no other children.

If you or someone you know could provide a loving home for Jenna* or Alice*, please call 4227 1122 or email enquiries@catholiccare.dow.org.au *Not their real names.

CARITAS GLOBAL GIFTS—GIVE A LITTLE DIFFERENTLY THIS CHRISTMAS

As we welcome the season of Advent, the season of waiting and preparing our hearts for the birth of Child Jesus. May we, as individuals, schools and parishes, act and pray for a more just and fair world, a world full of hope, peace, joy and love. Send a Christmas message to those you love, and give to those in need.

When you choose a Global Gift card to give to family to friends this Christmas, you after bringing a moment to joy and helping create a lifetime of change for some of the world's most vulnerable people.

Order Global Gift cards online at:
www.globalgifts.org.au or call us on 1800 024 413

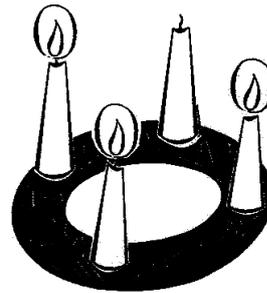
VOCATIONS—WHO IS YOUR KING?

We sometimes put off thinking about vocation, or what God wants, instead putting our energy into other areas. God is calling; we need to prioritise our response. Pray, talk with others, find out what God wants. Please contact Fr Duane Fernandez on 0414 626 357 or priesthood@dow.org.au

THE JOURNEY CATHOLIC RADIO PROGRAM—AIRS 3rd Dec 2017

This week on the Journey, the first Sunday of Advent, Fr Richard Healy reflects on the Gospel of Matthew and encourages us to be alert and on guard! Walking the Walk, with Sam Clear talks about Facing the Darkness,

Sr Hilda shares her Wisdom from The Abbey, and reminds us to Call Him God (repeat), and Fr Dave Callaghan in his God spot, The Call encourages with his words of My Sheep, Listen To My Voice (repeat). Our music this week is at the top of our game, put it all together and you have an inspiring show about faith, hope, love and life. Go to www.jcr.org.au or www.itunes.jcr.org.au where you can listen anytime and subscribe to weekly shows by email.



The Advent Wreath is part of our long-standing Catholic tradition. However, the actual origins are uncertain. There is evidence of pre-Christian Germanic peoples using wreaths with lit candles during the cold and dark December days as a sign of hope in the future warm

and extended-sunlight days of Spring. In Scandinavia during Winter, lighted candles were placed around a wheel, and prayers were offered to the god of light to turn "the wheel of the earth" back toward the sun to lengthen the days and restore warmth.

By the Middle Ages, the Christians adapted this tradition and used the Advent wreathes as part of their spiritual preparation for Christmas. After all, Christ is "the Light that came into the world" to dispel the darkness of sin and to radiate the truth and love of God (cf. John 3:19-21). By 1600, both Catholics and Lutherans had more formal practices surrounding the Advent wreath.

The symbolism of the Advent wreath is beautiful. The wreath is made of various evergreens, signifying continuous life. Even these evergreens have a traditional meaning which can be adapted to our faith.: The laurel signifies victory over persecution and suffering; pine, holly, and yew, immortality; and cedar, strength and healing. Holly also has a special Christian symbolism: The prickly leaves remind us of the crown of thorns, and one English legend tells of how the cross was made of holly. The circle of the wreath, which has no beginning and no end, symbolizes the eternity of God, the immortality of the soul, and the everlasting life found in Christ. Any pine cones, nuts, or seedpods used to decorate the wreath also symbolize life and resurrection. All together, the wreath of evergreens depicts the immortality of our soul and the new, everlasting life promised to us through Christ, the eternal Word of the Father, who entered our world becoming true man and who was victorious over sin and death through His own passion, death, and resurrection.

Advent wreaths remind us of the Hope of Christ. It is this Hope that gives purpose to our lives.

My dear people,

The season of ADVENT can appear confusing. It is a season of preparation for Christmas, and yet today's Gospel does not speak about cribs and angels - rather, it issues a warning: "Stay awake! You do not know when the master of the house is coming."

The Latin word ADVENTUM simply means a 'coming', but as the Liturgy spells it out, the term more accurately refers to 'comings'. It is important to understand this so that we might discover what the Church is trying to say.

The first part of Advent features the coming of Jesus at the end of time in majesty and glory, the judge of the living and the dead. The Church is not interested in the false sentimentality that surrounds Christmas. For the first half of Advent the Church is showing us **why** this Child has come into the world. He has come to bring peace - yes - But only to people of goodwill. "I have come to bring.. a sword" He would say (Matt 10:34) - His teaching would divide the world.

The second coming at the end of time will happen as surely as did the first at Bethlehem. So, having set her sights on the **reason** for His coming, the Church during the second half of Advent looks back to Bethlehem and acts as if she were awaiting this birth for the first time. The people of those days did not know what to expect - we do, with 2,000 years of hindsight. This Baby is God Himself who comes into our world to take its sins upon Himself. He comes to die in sacrifice. From Christmas to Epiphany the Church will stand in wonder and awe at this tremendous expression of love on the part of God.



Advent, then, is a kind of reverse order, but it makes sense when you discover the reason. The early Fathers of the Church also speak of a **third** coming - the coming of Christ **each day** into our lives, especially in the Holy Eucharist. It is by no coincidence that

Bethlehem in Hebrew means "the House of Bread"; that the Baby will be placed in a manger or a food-box for the flock, for He Himself would be the food for His flock and that our English word Christmas means "Christ's Mass". We celebrate His birth by offering His death.

How best observe Advent, especially in the midst of a secular culture interested only in end-of-year parties? Advent is not a season of penance like Lent. Rather, it is a time of special prayerfulness and reflection. We can follow the Church's liturgy more carefully, attend Mass more often, spend more time in private prayer and reading. This will help us open our hearts to the moving accounts of Christ's birth and the people who prepared for it. It will help us courageously face Christ's Second Coming - for most of us it will be the moment of our death.

So, as we look to the past to Christ's birth, and as we look to the future to His coming at the end of time, we realize, realistically that we live only now. We are Christians **now**.

As a model for living the Christ-life, one person stands out—Mary. And so the Feast of her Immaculate Conception begins the Church's year, as it were. Why all this fuss about Mary? Do we over-glorify her? Shouldn't all our focus be on Christ Himself? Doesn't devotion to Our Lady distract us from the real issue—Christ? Spiritual writers for centuries have said that, actually, we cannot say enough about Mary. Why? Because the Church's teaching about Mary is her teaching about **us**. What affects Mary affects us. What God did for her, He intends for us!

Come to Mass on Friday, our Parish's Feast. Following the 7:30pm Mass there will be an end-of-year gathering.

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Earlier in the year, the Diocese for Lismore appealed for funds following a devastating flood in which many people lost all their possessions. The new Bishop, Greg Homeming, has written thanking us for our donation. With the money raised, the Diocese provided 1,050 mattresses.

Fr Graham Schmitzer
Parish Priest