

# 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)

[www.facebook.com/Immaculate-Conception-Unanderra-Parish-102440924742769/](https://www.facebook.com/Immaculate-Conception-Unanderra-Parish-102440924742769/)



**Parish Priest:** Fr Duane Fernandez  
 Email: [Duane.Fernandez@dow.org.au](mailto:Duane.Fernandez@dow.org.au)  
 Mobile: 0414 626 357

**Polish Chaplain:** Fr Jerzy Slowinski  
 Email: [slowinski54@gmail.com](mailto:slowinski54@gmail.com)  
 Mobile: 0410 225 975

**Parish Assistant:** Sr Kerry Gardiner  
 Email: [Kerry.Gardiner@sosj.org.au](mailto:Kerry.Gardiner@sosj.org.au)  
 Mobile: 0421 463 871

**Parish Pastoral Council President:** 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 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)  
 Phone: 4271 1068

## THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT (YEAR C) – 8 DEC 2024

**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 9 Dec</b><br><i>The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i> | Mass: 7am<br><b>Special Parish Feast Day Mass: 7pm</b><br><i>(Followed by refreshments)</i>  |   |
| <b>Tues 10 Dec</b><br><i>Our Lady of Loreto</i>                                 | <b>No Mass today</b>   | Mass: 7:45am  |
| <b>Wed 11 Dec</b><br><i>St Damascus I, pope</i>                                 | <b>No Mass today</b>   | Adoration: 4:30pm - 5:30pm<br>Mass: 5:30pm                       |
| <b>Thurs 12 Dec</b><br><i>Our Lady of Guadalupe</i>                             | Mass: 5:30pm<br>Reconciliation: 6pm - 6:30pm<br>Adoration: 6pm - 7pm              | Mass: 7:45am  |
| <b>Fri 13 Dec</b><br><i>St Lucy, virgin, martyr</i>                             | Mass: 7am<br>Adoration: 7:30am - 8am    | Mass: 9:30am  |
| <b>Sat 14 Dec</b><br><i>St John of the Cross, priest, doctor</i>                | Rosary: 7am<br>Mass: 7:30am<br>Reconciliation: 11am - 12noon<br><b>Mass: 6pm</b>  | Rosary: 8:30am<br>Mass: 9am<br>Reconciliation: 9:30am - 10:30am  |
| <b>Sun 15 Dec</b>   | Mass: 8am<br><b>Mass: 10am (Polish)</b>  | Mass: 10am<br>Mass: 5pm   |

### PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

#### Recently Deceased

Benjamin Antonio, Mercedes Ferrer, Francisca Quetcher, Sr Michelle Condon RSJ

#### Prayers for the sick

Michael Murphy (Figtree), Peter Lathourakis, Felix Johnson, Antoinette Sakr, Josephine Moran

#### Anniversaries

Rufino Lazaro, Norm Bransgrove Snr  
 Fred Brame, Fr Andrew Apostoli  
 Ian Ritchie



### PARISH OFFICE HOURS

[unanderra@dow.org.au](mailto:unanderra@dow.org.au) / 4271 1068

Monday: 8:30am-1:30pm  
 Tuesday: Closed  
 Wednesday: 8:30am-1:30pm  
 Thursday: Closed  
 Friday: 8:30am-3:30pm

## *Message from Fr Duane*

It's that time of year again – registrations for our **next Alpha** are open! For those who are not aware, Alpha is accessible for everyone, from those who haven't had any background in faith, to those who have been practising Catholics for decades – and everyone in between. It is for people of all backgrounds and all ages (over 18). Feel free to register yourself using the Alpha cards (or contact the parish office). Importantly – please also consider who in your life you might invite to Alpha. We are so blessed to know the love of God in our lives – and so many people in our time have not yet received this opportunity. Alpha is the best way that I have seen to give this opportunity to others in a welcoming, relaxed environment. Feel free to take as many Alpha cards from the resource table to invite others (maybe in your Christmas cards!)

I share a few testimonies from past Alpha guests below:

*"I loved going to Alpha every week to watch the videos, have a good chat with my group and the amazing dinner. By the end of Alpha it was like a family within the church community and I loved how inclusive everyone was no matter the age or religion."*  
Annalise – 21 years old

*"Alpha for me was really special, in more ways than one. It opened my eyes to religion & helped me relate to different circumstances in different videos. It helped the Parish community bond & share stories and memories over an amazing dinner."*  
Toby – 23 years old

*"For me Alpha was a great introduction to the Catholic faith, as I haven't come from a religious upbringing and didn't attend catholic schools growing up. It helped me to work through some of my fears and anxieties that I didn't even know I had. It has given me a really good insight into the principles of living as a catholic in the modern world and how a lot of the Catholic faith aligns with how I see myself and want to continue to see myself in the future as I continue to grow in this space"*  
Gemma – 32 years old

*"Doing the Alpha course I discovered there is so much more to life. I feel happier, I "see" and appreciate God's little miracles every day and made new friends. Alpha became the highlight of my week. It felt like hanging out with good friends, catching up and connecting over delicious meals, being inspired and awakened to new possibilities through the short films. Everyone should gift this experience to themselves because it changes your life for the better."*  
Natalie – 46 years old

### **Parish Feast Day**

This year, the **Feast of the Immaculate Conception** and our Parish Feast Day is moved from the usual December 8th (since the Second Sunday of Advent takes precedence) to **Monday December 9th**. We will celebrate a special Mass at 7pm on Monday 9th December, followed by refreshments in our newly renovated St Joseph's Room. It would be wonderful to see many of us gathering together to celebrate Our Lady on this Solemn Feast Day, and to celebrate our wonderful parish community!

### **Fr Duane Fernandez**

## *Message from Sr Kerry*

A few weeks back for my Scripture class I had prepared blank Advent calendars for the class. We sat around in a circle talking about Advent as a time of preparation. We discussed little things that we could do to prepare for Christmas. I did stress that whatever we chose to do for a particular day we were to try to do that just once for a given day. We had plenty of ideas and now we were ready to complete our own personal Advent calendars.

The students were most diligent in completing their calendars. What surprised me was how they had a different goal for each day. At the end of the class, we shared what now filled the blank squares. One girl held up her calendar and said 'I have crossed out the first one. I don't like cleaning my room.' I asked was she going to write something else in the square. She replied, 'No, I am going to give myself the day off.'

Advent is a time of preparation. How serious are you about this Advent? Are you for real or are you giving yourself 'the day off?'



### **Sr Kerry Gardiner**

#### **ROSTER – THIS WEEKEND**

| December  | Church Washing      | Susan Adams                                |                                 |
|-----------|---------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| Sat 7 Dec | Church Cleaning     | F Fernandez, B Rice, R Tassone, K McCrohon |                                 |
| Sat 7 Dec | Lawns               | H Fernandez, Milan, Broeckmann, A Oliphant |                                 |
|           | Lectors             | Welcomers                                  | Children's liturgy              |
| 6pm 7 Dec | D Nugent            | B Farraway                                 |                                 |
| 8am 8 Dec | A Browne            | J Sharwood                                 | Maria Matos,<br>Sandra Michelin |
| Counters  | A Kelly, B Farraway |  |                                 |

#### **ROSTER – NEXT WEEKEND**

| December   | Church Washing                      | Susan Adams                                 |  |
|------------|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Sat 14 Dec | Church Cleaning                     | J Haywood, L Salway, M Hurley, T Vaafusuaga |  |
| Sat 14 Dec | Lawns                               | No lawnmowing this week                     |  |
|            | Lectors                             | Welcomers                                   | Children's liturgy                       |
| 6pm 14 Dec | M Rodwell                           | T Chicharo                                  |  |
| 8am 15 Dec | M Matos                             | A Arnone                                    | Kylie & Molly Hertsch,<br>Gemma Farrugia |
| Counters   | M Murphy (FH), C Stratton, M Winner |   |  |

## PARISH NEWS

### Christmas Day lunch

- 12pm at the St Therese Parish Centre

If you or anyone you know might be interested in attending as a guest, or volunteer, please RSVP to [unanderra@dow.org.au](mailto:unanderra@dow.org.au) with the subject heading "Christmas Lunch" for catering purposes. Flyers at the resource table to invite others



### Vinnies News - A client's response



*"Just wanted to thank you for taking the time to care enough to come and see me at my home. After speaking with you, a fridge and washing machine arrived the very next day, from Ryan's Appliances in Wollongong. I am so thankful. I can't believe how quickly you made it happen. You lifted an unbelievable weight from my shoulders by helping me, when I thought there was no hope in sight. God Bless"*

Your generous giving especially through the "Poor Box" enables this to happen.

On sale this week at the side door of the church, **Columban calendars \$10, Christmas cards \$5**

### Church grounds

The gardens around the Church are in need of some care. If you have any spare time between now and Christmas and would like to weed one of the gardens to tidy up the grounds for Christmas could you please contact the Parish office. Your help would be greatly appreciated.

### New altar servers welcome

We are in the process of recruiting new altar servers - any children who have already received their First Holy Communion are eligible. If your child is interested, please contact the parish office.

### CWL news - Christmas hampers for seafarers

The Catholic Women's league are preparing Christmas hampers for distribution to Seafarers. The Mission for Seafarers have requested magazines e.g. Wheels magazine, Sports magazines, National Geographic to give to the Seafarers. They have also requested 4 x guitars. If you have items to donate, please call **Cathy 0421 189 948** for drop off arrangements.

### Becoming Catholic

Are you interested in becoming Catholic - or do you know anyone who might be interested? The first step in the process will be an individual meeting with Fr Duane, who will guide those interested into a preparation plan that will work best for them. Please contact Fr Duane or the Parish office.

### Children's Liturgy Team and Baptism Preparation Team 2025

We are looking for volunteers to join the Children's Liturgy Team and the Baptism Preparation Team in 2025. These are both deeply rewarding ministries for all involved and help children and families draw closer to God and the Church. Interested to know more - please contact the parish office.

### Parish Finances - week ending 1 December 2024

|       |  |                            |
|-------|--|----------------------------|
| \$676 | First Collection                         | - Clergy Remuneration Fund |
| \$442 | Second collection                        | - Parish expenses          |
| \$230 | Tap Point donations                      |                            |
| \$340 | Planned giving envelopes                 |                            |
| \$503 | Direct debits (weekly average from Oct). |                            |

*Direct debits can be contributed weekly, fortnightly or monthly*

### Recycling bins - \$681 raised this year

Your donations of 10c recyclable bottles, cans and plastics are welcome. Our recycling bins are located in the church car park.



## THE JOURNEY CATHOLIC RADIO PROGRAMME - AIRS SUNDAY 8 DECEMBER 2024

On the Journey this week. Fr Joshua Whicker MGL says the Gospel calls us to remove obstacles and open our hearts to Jesus. Mother Hilda says that no matter how disfigured someone's earthly identity may seem, they are known and cherished by the Father. Fr Tony Percy says we're called into the wilderness to experience silence allowing God's Word to reach the wilderness within us. Darren McDowell says that God lovingly seeks a deep, healing relationship with each of us, and Amie Micallef says Advent invites us to pause, surrender our burdens to Jesus, and find rest in his love. Listen at [jcr.org.au](http://jcr.org.au)



## A VOCATION VIEW

John the Baptist cried out and made ready for the Lord. Promote the gospel in our community (Luke 3:1-6) 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)



## ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

MONTAGUE STREET, NORTH WOLLONGONG

Vinnies are looking for your help. They need volunteers to help sort their ever-growing donations. As little as 3 hours/week will make a big difference.

If you are available and would like to share some of your time, it would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Lisa **0473 100 110** between 8am - 4pm Monday to Friday.



## SHARE HOPE THIS CHRISTMAS

- INVITE OTHERS TO CHRISTMAS MASS

All of us know friends and family who are disconnected from faith. Recent research shows that 37% of people would attend church if invited by close friends and family and 30% are yet to make up their minds (or don't have close friends or family who attend Church) [NCLS, Australian Openness to Invitation, 2020].

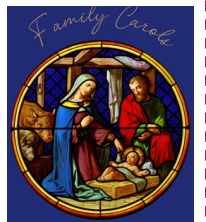
That means in practice that if we are courageous enough to invite, there's a good chance you will encounter someone who will say yes or at least be open to considering your invitation. We often think that we need to have all the answers, be a master in apologetics or arguing the faith, or be one of "those types" of Christians. In reality, all that's needed is presence, relationship, willingness to listen, and the courage to say, "hey, this is a bit out there, but I was wondering if you'd like to come to Church with me this Christmas?" Have a look at the helpful tips for inviting others to Church this Christmas and share hope this Christmas.

## GATHER CHRISTMAS CAROLS

Christmas Carols will be held on **Monday 16 December from 5pm**. BYO picnic in the grounds of Edmund Rice College, enter via Mt Keira Rd, with community carol singing from 7pm.

All ages, individuals & families most welcome. For further information:

**Fiona 0413 121383**



## CATHOLIC YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS WOLLONGONG

Serves young people in Illawarra, Macarthur, Southern Highlands and Shoalhaven regions. To stay up to date with what is happening around the diocese, you can access the youth calendar <https://www.dow.org.au/cymw/> Follow Catholic Youth and Young adults on Instagram and Facebook.



## 8 DECEMBER - THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

First Reading - Baruch 5:1-9

*Jerusalem - God will show you splendour*

Jerusalem, take off your dress of sorrow and distress,  
put on the beauty of the glory of God for ever,  
wrap the cloak of the integrity of God around you,  
put the diadem of the glory of the Eternal on your head:  
since God means to show your splendour to every nation under heaven,  
since the name God gives you for ever will be,  
'Peace through integrity, and honour through devotedness.'  
Arise, Jerusalem, stand on the heights and turn your eyes to the east:  
see your sons reassembled from west and east  
at the command of the Holy One, jubilant that God has remembered them.  
Though they left you on foot, with enemies for an escort,  
now God brings them back to you like royal princes carried back in glory.  
For God has decreed the flattening of each high mountain, of the everlasting hills,  
the filling of the valleys to make the ground level  
so that Israel can walk in safety under the glory of God.  
And the forests and every fragrant tree will provide shade  
for Israel at the command of God;  
for God will guide Israel in joy by the light of his glory  
with his mercy and integrity for escort.

Responsorial Psalm - The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.

1. When the Lord delivered Zion from bondage,  
it seemed like a dream.  
Then was our mouth filled with laughter,  
on our lips there were songs. R.
2. The heathens themselves said: 'What marvels  
the Lord worked for them!'  
What marvels the Lord worked for us!  
Indeed we were glad. R.
3. Deliver us, O Lord, from our bondage  
as streams in dry land.  
Those who are sowing in tears  
will sing when they reap. R.
4. They go out, they go out, full of tears,  
carrying seed for the sowing:  
they come back, they come back, full of song,  
carrying their sheaves.

Second Reading - Philippians 1:4-6,8-11

*Show yourselves sinless and without blame in the day of Christ*

Every time I pray for all of you, I pray with joy, remembering how you have helped to spread the Good News from the day you first heard it right up to the present. I am quite certain that the One who began this good work in you will see that it is finished when the Day of Christ Jesus comes; and God knows how much I miss you all, loving you as Christ Jesus loves you. My prayer is that your love for each other may increase more and more and never stop improving your knowledge and deepening your perception so that you can always recognise what is best. This will help you to become pure and blameless, and prepare you for the Day of Christ, when you will reach the perfect goodness which Jesus Christ produces in us for the glory and praise of God.

Gospel Acclamation:

**Alleluia, alleluia! Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths: all people shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia**

Gospel - Luke 3:1-6

*All people shall see the salvation of God.*

In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar's reign, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of the lands of Ituraea and Trachonitis, Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas the word of God came to John son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. He went through the whole Jordan district proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the sayings of the prophet Isaiah:

A voice cries in the wilderness:  
Prepare a way for the Lord,  
make his paths straight.  
Every valley will be filled in,  
every mountain and hill be laid low,  
winding ways will be straightened  
and rough roads made smooth.  
And all mankind shall see the salvation of God.