

PARISH AND SHRINE OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

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

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



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 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)

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THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD (YEAR A) – 8 JANUARY 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 9 Jan <i>The Baptism of the Lord</i>	Mass: 7am	
Tues 10 Jan	Mass: 5:30pm Rosary 6pm Adoration: 6pm- 7pm	Mass: 7:45am
Wed 11 Jan	Liturgy of the Word with Holy Communion: 9:30am	Adoration: 4:30pm Reconciliation: 4:30pm—5:15pm Mass: 5:30pm
Thurs 12 Jan	Rosary: 6pm Adoration: 6pm - 7pm Reconciliation 6pm- 6:50pm Mass: 7pm	Mass: 7:45am
Fri 13 Jan <i>St Hilary, bishop, doctor</i>	Mass: 7am	Mass: 9:30am
Sat 14 Jan	Rosary: 7am Mass: 7:30am Reconciliation: 5pm - 5:30pm Mass: 6pm	Rosary: 8:30am Mass: 9am Reconciliation: 9:30am—10:30am
Sun 15 Jan	Mass: 8am Mass: 10am (<i>Polish</i>)	Mass: 10am Mass: 5pm

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Recently Deceased

Maria Ianuzzi, Therese Suters, Silvana Witheridge, Sophie Trzcinski

Prayers for the sick

Craig Battley, Francesca Quetcher, Jackie Allen, Lesley Lloyd, Vera Cleary

Anniversaries

Fr Kevin McGovern, James Salway, Ernie Kurtz, Tomo Marusic, Frank Posavec, William F Butler, Margaret Comensoli



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

Together with the whole church we pray for the repose of the soul of Pope Benedict XVI, while giving thanks for his life of humble service of the Lord and his flock. So much could be said at this time, but I couldn't help but note that much of the commentary in the secular media has focused on contrasting Pope Benedict and Pope Francis, according to simplistic political distinctions such as "conservative" and "liberal". This is an unfortunate over-simplification, a symptom of an increasingly polarized society, which reflects a superficial understanding of these two Popes. The fact is that neither of these Popes can fit neatly into secular political categories – which is fitting, since neither could Jesus Christ himself, in whose name they have shepherded his flock. Just to name a couple of examples: Pope Benedict XVI was so committed to caring for the environment in both his teachings and his actions that he was dubbed "The Green Pope" by secular observers of his papacy. His encyclical "Caritas in Veritate" (Charity in Truth) was a social encyclical that called for radical economic reforms that respond practically to the plight of the poor. Having read the encyclicals of both Benedict and Francis, it is clear to me that one mind and heart shines through both of these shepherds of the Church – namely, the mind and heart of Christ, the Good Shepherd.

Our parish vision begins with the words "we are a diverse community united by our love for Jesus and for one another". This is the deepest truth not only of our parish community but of the universal Church. Commenting on his own first encyclical, entitled "God is Love", Pope Benedict stated that "God is love. On this solid rock the entire faith of the church is based." In speaking of Pope Benedict XVI in 2016 at the 65th anniversary of his priesthood, Pope Francis said the following to his predecessor with the characteristic affection that he always held for him:

"In one of the many beautiful passages you have written on the priesthood, you emphasize that, at the hour of Simon's definitive call, Jesus, fixing his gaze on him, essentially asks only one thing: 'Do you love me?'. How beautiful and true this is! Because it is here, as you go on to tell us, in that 'Do you love me?', that the Lord establishes the true meaning of shepherding, because only through love for the Lord will the Lord be able to shepherd through us: 'Lord, you know everything, you know that I love you'".

How fitting, then, that those closest to Pope Benedict XVI at his deathbed reported that the last intelligible words that he spoke were simply: "Lord, I love you". May we in our parish continue to see ourselves, each other, and all people not through the simplistic and divisive political categories that this world might want to impose, but rather through the lens of the love of the Lord for us and our love for the Lord – for this love is the key to building unity in the Church and the world, upon the rock of God's love for all made visible in Christ.

I encourage you to read (or read again) the encyclicals of Pope Benedict XVI during 2023: "God is Love" (2006), "In hope we were saved" (2007), and "Charity in Truth" (2009), as well as "The Light of Faith" (2013) – which, as if to confirm my message here, was co-authored by Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis!

ALPHA – CATERING AND PRAYER TEAMS

Alpha is the most effective tool I have come across to help people of whatever belief or background to come to encounter the same love of Jesus that we have been blessed to discover. In addition to attending or inviting people to attend, there are two other key ways that you might be able to support Alpha, which begins on February 8: via catering support, or prayer support. If you are open to helping in either of these ways, please share your details on the expression of interest forms in the church for either the "Catering Team" or the "Prayer Team", or contact me or the parish office for more information.

CONGRATULATIONS AND THANK YOU TO SISTER KERRY GARDINER!

On the 6th of January, Sister Kerry Gardiner celebrates her 53rd Anniversary of Profession. We are blessed to have her among us, and while she will return from time away in a couple of weeks, I am sure she would welcome our best wishes before then as well. I have witnessed just some of the fruits of her work in our parish during the past 3 years – including pastoral care of the sick, teaching in state schools, Sacramental preparation, music and liturgical ministries, hospitality, various leadership roles among the parish groups, and on a personal note, constant support and encouragement to me. Only God can know how much good and lasting fruit has been borne throughout her 53 years of faithful service to the Lord and his people. May the Lord bless her in abundance!

Fr Duane Fernandez

ROSTER – NEXT WEEKEND

January	Church Washing	Barbara Faraway	
Sat 14 Jan	Church Cleaning	Allen, Haywood, Salway, Hurley, Vaafusuaga	
Sat 14 Jan	Lawns	No lawn mowing this week	
	Lectors	Welcomers	Children's liturgy
6pm 14 Jan	N O'Donoghue	S Marsala	
8am 15 Jan	A Kelly	F Carolan, J Sharwood	School Holidays
Counters	A Gunning, M Caudero, C Garrett		

ALL YOUR PASTORAL NEEDS



For any pastoral needs:
please contact



Fr Duane Fernandez - 0414 626 357

duane.fernandez@dow.org.au

Sr Kerry Gardiner - 0421 463 871

Kerry.Gardiner@sosj.org.au

PARISH NEWS

The Epiphany Blessing

(Marking Homes with Blessed Chalk for the New Year)

The ancient custom of marking the door of the home with blessed chalk is a way of incorporating the liturgical feast of the Epiphany as a domestic ritual into the prayer life of the family. Chalk is first blessed in the parish church at Masses for the Epiphany and then people are invited to take some home and to mark the lintel of their front door as follows:

20 C+M+B 23

The letters C, M and B stand for the traditional names for the Three Wise Men who come seeking Jesus: Casper, Melchior and Balthasar. The letters also represent the words *Christus Mansionem Benedicat* (May Christ Bless this Abode). *Blessed chalk will be available at Sunday Masses this weekend.*

Vinnies Christmas Appeal

The Conference would like to thank all the generous Parishioners who again supported the Vinnies Giving Tree and the Vinnies Christmas Appeal. Forty five Christmas hampers were distributed and toys given to over 70 children supporting those in need within the Parish area.

The **Vinnies Christmas Appeal raised \$2,059.45** from the three Christmas Masses. All money raised is used to support the poor of the Parish area. The Unanderra Conference receives **over ten requests for food, rent assistance or help with electricity bills every week.** Your support is much appreciated and the society supports you in prayer.



Recycling bins—\$72 raised during December

\$72 was raised during December. The total raised for 2022 is now \$567.

All proceeds go to the Parish.

Our bins are located in the church car park.



Curious about Faith - Try Alpha

You're invited to **Alpha**, a place to explore the Christian faith in an easy and friendly environment.

Each session starts with dinner in small groups before watching a talk on a question of faith. Then there's plenty of time to share your thoughts - you can say anything you like, or nothing at all - question everything!!

There's no follow up, no charge and never any pressure. **Everyone's welcome.** No matter your background or beliefs, you're invited. So why not see where your curiosity takes you?



We'll be starting on **Wednesday 8th February at 7pm in the Parish Centre at St Therese Parish**, 2 Powell Street West Wollongong. To RSVP, for catering purposes only, please contact **Melissa on 0419 465 050**. We also have expression of interest forms out in the foyer.

Parish Finances - week ending 1 January

\$674 First Collection - Clergy Remuneration Fund

\$464 Second collection - Parish expenses

\$290 Tap Point - Parish donations

\$270 Planned giving envelopes

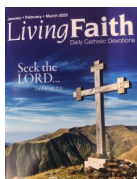
\$549 Direct debits (weekly average from Dec).

Direct debits can be contributed weekly, fortnightly or monthly.

Living Faith books—Jan, Feb and March 2023

The new Living Faith books have arrived.

There is also a separate Living Faith Kids book - which includes daily reflections, prayers and activities. Cost is \$5.



Lay Carmelite meeting

The first meeting for 2023 will be in the St Joseph's room on Saturday 7 February. All are welcome.

Call Ann Baumber on 0427 235 955 for more information.

THE JOURNEY CATHOLIC RADIO PROGRAMME – AIRS SUNDAY 8 JANUARY 2023

Journey Catholic Radio is a weekly radio program and podcast developed by the Catholic Diocese of Wollongong all about faith, hope, love and life. It includes awesome music, a weekly Gospel reflection, interviews and a variety of weekly inputs from some of the best Catholic presenters in Australia. Listen at jcr.org.au



A VOCATION VIEW

God's plan for the salvation of the Israelites comes to fruition with the birth of Christ. God continues to call men to the priesthood to bring about the completion of this salvation. (Isaiah 9:5-6)

If you want to talk about your discernment, please contact the diocesan vocations director, Fr Duane Fernandez at

vocations@dow.org.au



PART TIME EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY – PARISH SECRETARY ST MICHAEL'S NOWRA

Nowra parish is seeking the services of a part time secretary for 10 hrs per week – days to be decided.

The position requires skills in administration, bookkeeping and maintaining a database. The parish secretary needs to be a committed and practising Catholic, embracing the teachings and ethos of the Catholic Church in their daily life.

If interested, please make contact via email to request an application pack for this position to

frances.vanleerdam@dow.org.au

Applications close 5pm Friday 6 January 2023.

SOCIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT

Reflect together on how we might be caught up in structural and cultural violence. <https://socialjustice.catholic.org.au>

THEOLOGY OF THE BODY

– MADE FOR MORE - EVENTS IN SYDNEY

The Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney is proud to present the **'Made for More' events**, brought to you by the Theology of the Body Institute! Join Christopher West and the team as they creatively weave together dynamic presentations with live music, media, and sacred art for an evening of beauty and reflection on the meaning of life, love, and human destiny. We hope that by attending you will come away with a faith-filled vision of hope that will instil in you sheer wonder and joy of being alive!

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MfzzKONmUjQ&ab_channel=TheologyoftheBodyInstitute

The Made for More events in Sydney will be held at two

locations on the following dates:

When: Friday, 20 January 2023

Where: St Mary's Cathedral Hall – St Mary's Road, Sydney

2nd Event

When: Saturday, 21 January 2023

Where: All Saints Catholic Parish Hall – 48 George Street, Liverpool

Tickets: General admission – \$25 Student/ Concession – \$10
Free entry for children 10 years and under. Adult supervision required for all children under 18 years.

Online booking: <https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/978896>

8 JAN - THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD (YEAR A)

First Reading - Isaiah 60:1-6

The glory of the Lord shines upon you.

Arise, shine out, Jerusalem, for your light has come, the glory of the Lord is rising on you, though night still covers the earth and darkness the peoples.
Above you the Lord now rises and above you his glory appears.
The nations come to your light and kings to your dawning brightness.
Lift up your eyes and look round: all are assembling and coming towards you, your sons from far away and your daughters being tenderly carried.
At this sight you will grow radiant, your heart throbbing and full;
since the riches of the sea will flow to you, the wealth of the nations come to you;
camels in throngs will cover you, and dromedaries of Midian and Ephah;
everyone in Sheba will come, bringing gold and incense and singing the praise of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm - Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.

1. O God, give your judgement to the king, to a king's son your justice,
that he may judge your people in justice and your poor in right judgement. R.
2. In his days justice shall flourish and peace till the moon fails.
He shall rule from sea to sea, from the Great River to earth's bounds. R.
3. The kings of Tarshish and the sea coasts shall pay him tribute.
The kings of Sheba and Seba shall bring him gifts.
Before him all kings shall fall prostrate, all nations shall serve him. R.
4. For he shall save the poor when they cry and the needy who are helpless.
He will have pity on the weak and save the lives of the poor. R.

Second Reading - Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6

The revelation means that pagans now share the same inheritance, that they are parts of the same body.

You have probably heard how I have been entrusted by God with the grace he meant for you, and that it was by a revelation that I was given the knowledge of the mystery. This mystery that has now been revealed through the Spirit to his holy apostles and prophets was unknown to any men in past generations; it means that pagans now share the same inheritance, that they are parts of the same body, and that the same promise has been made to them, in Jesus Christ, through the gospel.

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, Alleluia! We have seen his star in the East; and have come to adore the Lord. Alleluia!

Gospel - Matthew 2:1-12

We have come from the East to worship the Lord.

After Jesus had been born at Bethlehem in Judaea during the reign of King Herod, some wise men came to Jerusalem from the east. 'Where is the infant king of the Jews?' they asked. 'We saw his star as it rose and have come to do him homage.' When King Herod heard this he was perturbed, and so was the whole of Jerusalem. He called together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, and enquired of them where the Christ was to be born. 'At Bethlehem in Judaea,' they told him 'for this is what the prophet wrote:

*And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
you are by no means least among the leaders of Judah,
for out of you will come a leader
who will shepherd my people Israel.'*

Then Herod summoned the wise men to see him privately. He asked them the exact date on which the star had appeared, and sent them on to Bethlehem. 'Go and find out all about the child,' he said 'and when you have found him, let me know, so that I too may go and do him homage.' Having listened to what the king had to say, they set out. And there in front of them was the star they had seen rising; it went forward, and halted over the place where the child was. The sight of the star filled them with delight, and going into the house they saw the child with his mother Mary, and falling to their knees they did him homage. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. But they were warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, and returned to their own country by a different way.

