

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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FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT (YEAR B) – 3 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 4 Dec	Mass: 7am	
Tues 5 Dec	Mass: 5:30pm Rosary: 6pm Adoration: 6pm - 7pm	Mass: 7:45am
Wed 6 Dec	Mass: 7am	Adoration: 4:30pm Reconciliation: 4:30pm - 5:15pm Mass: 5:30pm
Thurs 7 Dec <i>St Ambrose, bishop, doctor</i>	Mass: 11am (Polish) Mass: 5:30pm Rosary: 6pm Adoration: 6pm - 7pm Reconciliation: 6pm - 7pm	Mass: 7:45am
Fri 8 Dec <i>The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i>	Mass: 7am Mass: 6pm	Mass: 9:30am
Sat 9 Dec <i>St Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin, hermit</i>	Rosary: 7am Mass: 7:30am Reconciliation: 5pm - 5:30pm Mass: 6pm	Rosary: 8:30am Mass: 9am
Sun 10 Dec	Mass: 8am Mass: 10am (Polish)	Mass: 10am Mass: 5pm

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Recently Deceased

Vicki Maree Brown, John Sweeney,
Giuseppe Masi, Louise Packham

Prayers for the sick

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

Anniversaries

Nelson Mandella,
Maria Iannuzzi



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

And so we begin the **sacred season of Advent** – which means, “coming”. This is the sacred season in which we celebrate the first coming of Jesus and look forward to his second coming – praying that he will come more deeply into our hearts, our homes, our parish and our world during this Advent season. It is fitting that our whole church year begins with Advent – reminding us of the simple truth that person of Christ who came among us, taught us, saved us and remains with us always is the heart of all that we do as Catholics. Our worship at Mass is centred on Jesus. It is Jesus who calls us to share the gifts he has given us to help each other to pray. It is Jesus who calls us and empowers us to care for each other as a community, to build relationships in various ways through our simple community building initiatives. It is Jesus who calls us and empowers us to go out and take special care of the poor, vulnerable, lonely in the many ways that we live this out. It is Jesus who calls us to go and share the good news of his love for all people, through Alpha, RCIA and our other evangelising initiatives. In the words of Bishop Brian in his vision for Parishes published last week, “the beating heart of the parish is the person of Jesus, made present in Word, Sacrament, and the living community of believers.” If you haven’t yet picked up the 3 documents from the Bishop, please do so, read them when you get an opportunity and hold on to them as we will be building upon them in the coming year with further resources from the Office of the Bishop.

Our Parish Feast Day is **THIS FRIDAY 8TH DECEMBER – the Feast of the Immaculate Conception**. The usual 7am Mass will remain as normal for those who usually attend that Mass, but the main celebration of the Feast Day and of our Parish will take place at a special 6pm Mass, followed by a BBQ on the church grounds. All are welcome – and feel free to invite others! Let us give thanks during Advent for the “yes” of Mary that brought Jesus into our world – that same yes to God that permeated her entire being, as the perfect model of faith, kept free from sin from the very moment of her immaculate conception.

The prayer for the blessing of the Advent wreath is a prayer we can pray throughout the Advent season for ourselves and for our world:

Lord our God, we praise you for your Son, Jesus Christ: he is Emmanuel, the hope of the peoples, he is the wisdom that teaches and guides us, he is the Savior of every nation. Lord God, let your blessing come upon us as we light the candles of this wreath. May the wreath and its light be a sign of Christ's promise to bring us salvation. May he come quickly and not delay. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

We are very pleased to welcome Seminarian Sinh Le who will join Fr Duane and the parishes of West Wollongong and Unanderra for a 4 week Advent placement – welcome home Sinh!

Fr Duane Fernandez

Message from Sr Kerry

We can be overwhelmed with all that is happening in our world. Recently I was reading about the hostage/ prisoner exchange in the Middle East. The crimes of the prisoners were listed. Of course, you had the usual things we would be aware of in our own country. One crime listed was ‘throwing stones.’ I have personally witnessed this ‘crime’ in Jerusalem. When I saw this incident, I just thought to myself, ‘Will there ever be peace here?’

Seeing throwing stones listed as a crime hit me hard. I asked myself what stones do I throw? You may like to ask yourself the same question: what stones do I throw? It can be confronting if we are honest with ourselves. Perhaps my stone throwing leads others to say, ‘Will there ever be peace?’



It was most heartening to speak with those who expressed an interest in our commitment to catechetics in the parish. Thank you for your generosity and care.

Sr Kerry Gardiner

ROSTER – THIS WEEKEND

December	Church Washing	Helen Murphy	
Sat 2 Dec	Church Cleaning	G Lord, L Zanetti, S Adams	
Sat 2 Dec	Lawns	No lawn mowing this week	
	Lectors	Welcomers	Children's liturgy
6pm 2 Dec	D Nugent	C Cleary	
8am 3 Dec	C Lyon	G Simmonite	Kylie & Molly Hertsch, Gemma Farrugia
Counters	M Murphy (FH), C Stratton, M Winner		

ROSTER – NEXT WEEKEND

December	Church Washing	Helen Murphy	
Sat 9 Dec	Church Cleaning	Volunteers needed	
Sat 9 Dec	Lawns	H Fernandez, Milan Family, Broeckmann Family	
	Lectors	Welcomers	Children's liturgy
6pm 9 Dec	M Rodwell	B Faraway	
8am 10 Dec	A Kelly	J Sharwood	Leah Galea, Alison Sharwood
Counters	A Kelly, B Faraway		

PARISH NEWS

Parish Feast Day - Friday 8th December at 6pm.

Everyone is invited to celebrate our Parish Feast Day. Celebrations will begin with **mass at 6pm** followed by **sausage sizzle** in the parish grounds. Tea, coffee, cordial, biscuits and slices will also be available. Come along and join in the celebrations with other parishioners.



St Vincent De Paul Giving Tree

The Giving Christmas Tree has been placed in the church full of tags for children's toys and Christmas food. The gifts received from this tree are used by the Unanderra Vinnies Conference to distribute approximately 40 Christmas hampers and toys for about seventy children within the Unanderra area. Gifts need to be placed 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 at the table near the side door. **Christmas cards are \$5/pack of ten and the 2024 Columban calendar is \$10.**

Advent & Christmas Daily reflections - available now

The Sign: Daily Advent and Christmas Reflections 2023 - a captivating 80-page book filled with spiritually enriching daily reflections from Advent (3 December 2023) to the Baptism of the Lord (8 January 2024). **Cost is \$3.** Please leave money in the small drawer at the side door table.



RCIA program

It is exciting to have a number of people expressing their desire to become Catholic through the RCIA program (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults). The first step will be for Fr Duane to meet with each one during the coming weeks. If you're interested please contact Fr Duane at: duane.fernandez@dow.org.au

First Aid Training



We are arranging a **First Aid Training Day** (including the use of the defib machine) to be held in the St Joseph's meeting room. The course is 5 hours held over 2 days, with a certificate issued upon completion. The cost of the course is \$95. Please contact the Parish office if you are interested in attending.

Parish Finances - week ending 26 November 2023

\$529	First Collection	- Clergy Remuneration Fund
\$581	Second collection	- Parish expenses
\$200	Tap Point	- Parish donations
\$175	Planned giving envelopes	
\$489	Direct debits (weekly average from October).	

Direct debits can be contributed weekly, fortnightly or monthly

The easiest way for our parish to budget for the many and rising expenses of the parish is via the Planned Giving program – preferably Direct Debit via this QR code (2nd collection, and you can choose weekly, fortnightly or monthly and change your contribution at any stage if you need to). Planned Giving envelopes for cash are also still an option – contact the parish office for these.



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

THE JOURNEY CATHOLIC RADIO PROGRAMME – AIRS SUNDAY 3 DECEMBER 2023

On the Journey this week: Fr Joshua Whitehead says that we're invited to have a four-fold response this Advent to cooperate, to make sense of what God gives us. Mother Hilda on why we'll love Jesus to mount a crown with our thumbprints on it on our head. Fr Tony Percy says that there's a sense of urgency in Mark's Gospel, He uses the Greek word "eutheós" (English: immediately) 42 times in his Gospel, and 11 times in the first chapter. Plus, Advent reflections from Fr John Corrigan and Sr Mary Helen Hill OP. Listen at jcr.org.au



PURPOSE CONFERENCE FREE BUS FROM WOLLONGONG/ MACARTHUR - 18-35 YEARS OLD

The 'Purpose Conference' will feature world renowned Catholic speakers Jason Evert and Matt Fradd, and hundreds of young adults from Sydney and all over Australia. We are also providing a free bus from Wollongong Diocese where you can connect with other local young adults on the way to the event. Tickets to the event are limited and so are spots on the bus, so register for both as soon as you can!

Tickets: Book your own ticket to the conference via: dow.sh/Purpose23

Book your travel on Free Gong Bus: Feel free to make your own way to the Conference on Thursday 7 December, but be sure to reserve your spot on our Free Gong Bus for Friday 8 December by registering here (dow.sh/YA-BUS) and connect with other young adults from our Diocese on the journey - departing from West Wollongong Parish at 4pm or Rosemeadow Parish at 4.45pm.

Deadline for booking a spot on the bus is 3 December. Contact Fr Duane and the team at vocations@dow.org.au if you have any questions.

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

CARITAS AUSTRALIA'S GAZA CRISIS APPEAL

An estimated 1 million people have been displaced in Gaza with immediate food, shelter, health, and psychosocial needs. With your support, we will be able to help our partners on the ground to assist people displaced and affected by the current conflict. Please donate to Caritas Australia's Gaza Crisis Appeal. You can donate online www.caritas.org.au/gaza or phone **1800 024 413**

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 December 2023.**

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

3 DECEMBER - FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT (YEAR B)

First Reading - Isaiah 63:16-17,64:1,3-8

Oh, that you would tear the heavens apart and come down.

You, Lord, yourself are our Father, 'Our Redeemer' is your ancient name.

Why, Lord, leave us to stray from your ways and harden our hearts against fearing you?

Return, for the sake of your servants, the tribes of your inheritance.

Oh, that you would tear the heavens open and come down!

– at your Presence the mountains would melt.

No ear has heard, no eye has seen

any god but you act like this for those who trust him.

You guide those who act with integrity and keep your ways in mind.

You were angry when we were sinners; we had long been rebels against you.

We were all like men unclean, all that integrity of ours like filthy clothing.

We have all withered like leaves and our sins blew us away like the wind.

No one invoked your name or roused himself to catch hold of you.

For you hid your face from us and gave us up to the power of our sins.

And yet, Lord, you are our Father; we the clay, you the potter,

we are all the work of your hand.

Responsorial Psalm - Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.

1. O shepherd of Israel, hear us, shine forth from your cherubim throne.
O Lord, rouse up your might, O Lord, come to our help. R.
2. God of hosts, turn again, we implore, look down from heaven and see.
Visit this vine and protect it, the vine your right hand has planted. R.
3. May your hand be on the man you have chosen, the man you have given your strength.
And we shall never forsake you again; give us life that we may call upon your name. R.

Second Reading - 1 Corinthians 1:3-9 *The revelation we looked for, Christ Jesus our Lord.*

May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ send you grace and peace.

I never stop thanking God for all the graces you have received through Jesus Christ. I thank him that you have been enriched in so many ways, especially in your teachers and preachers; the witness to Christ has indeed been strong among you so that you will not be without any of the gifts of the Spirit while you are waiting for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed; and he will keep you steady and without blame until the last day, the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, because God by calling you has joined you to his Son, Jesus Christ; and God is faithful.

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia! Lord, show us your mercy and love, and grant us your salvation. Alleluia!

Gospel - Mark 13:33-37

Stay awake! You never know when the Lord will come.

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Be on your guard, stay awake, because you never know when the time will come. It is like a man travelling abroad: he has gone from home, and left his servants in charge, each with his own task; and he has told the doorkeeper to stay awake. So stay awake, because you do not know when the master of the house is coming, evening, midnight, cockcrow, dawn; if he comes unexpectedly, he must not find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake!'