

**11 December 2022**  
**Third Sunday of Advent**  
**Year A**



**Entrance Antiphon**

Rejoice in the Lord always;  
again I say, rejoice.  
Indeed, the Lord is near.

**First Reading** from the  
prophet Isaiah 34: 1-6,10

**Responsorial Psalm**  
Ps 145:6-10. R. see Is 35:4

**Response:**

Lord, come and save us.

**Second Reading** from the  
letter of St James 5: 7-10

**Gospel Acclamation**

Alleluia, alleluia!  
The Spirit of the Lord is  
upon me; he sent me to  
bring Good News to the  
poor. Alleluia!

**Holy Gospel** according to  
Matthew 11: 2-11

**Communion Antiphon**

Say to the faint of heart:  
Be strong and do not fear.  
Behold, our God will come,  
and he will save us.

Next Week

**Fourth Sunday of Advent**  
**Year A**

**First:** Is 7:10-14

**Responsorial Psalm**  
Ps 23:1-6. R. see vv 7. 10  
(R.) Let the Lord enter; he  
is king of glory.

**Second:** Rom 1:1-7

**Gospel:** Mt 1:18-24

*We acknowledge and respect the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we stand, the elders, past and present and all the Dharawal people. May we too be good stewards of this land.*



The country's bishops are encouraging Catholics to respond to the call from the head of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Australia to provide financial support to people in the war-torn nation as winter arrives.

Bishop Mykola Bychok CSsR gave an update on the situation in Ukraine during the plenary meeting of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference last month. He thanked the bishops for praying – and inviting their communities to pray – for Ukraine, and asked them to renew those prayers.

He also requested that bishops hold a special collection to “support refugees and people in Ukraine during this winter, which will be the most challenging for our country for decades of independence”.

The bishops gave strong support to that proposal, and are encouraging dioceses, eparchies, parishes, schools and other ministries to facilitate a special collection during Advent for Ukraine. “Mindful of the busyness of this pre-Christmas period, communities are invited to find a day, a weekend or some other moment or moments to focus on the people of Ukraine,” said Bishops Conference president Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB. “It should also be a time to again place the Prayer for Peace in Ukraine that the Bishops Conference composed in February in our minds and in our hearts.”

In his address to the bishops, Bishop Bychok described the devastation being caused in Ukraine—through loss of life, internal and international displacement, widespread property destruction or damage and other consequences of war.

He thanked Caritas Australia, Catholic Mission and Aid to the Church in Need, as well as dioceses and religious communities, for raising funds to provide humanitarian support.

He also acknowledged the Australian Government's allocation of humanitarian visas for people fleeing the war. All donations raised during the Advent appeal will support the work of Mudra Sprava (Wise Action), a Patriarchal Charitable Foundation in Ukraine. The organisation has three focus areas: Evacuation of people from frontline territories; Food packages for people in need; Shelters for internally displaced persons.

At a recent meeting with the country's bishops and Bishop Mykola Bychok CSsR, Eparch of Sts Peter and Paul for the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Australia, the bishops gave strong support to a special appeal to be held during Advent to “support refugees and people in Ukraine during this winter, which will be the most challenging for our country for decades of independence”. The Advent Appeal For Ukraine will take place across parishes and churches in our diocese this weekend 10/11 December.

All donations raised will support the work of Mudra Sprava (Wise Action), a Patriarchal Charitable Foundation in Ukraine. The organisation has three focus areas: Evacuation of people from frontline territories; Food packages for people in need; Shelters for internally displaced persons. A special leaving collection will be held in our parish. To find out more information or to donate online please visit <https://bit.ly/ukraineappeal2022>

**Your support of this appeal would be greatly appreciated.**

## Worship: Mass and Devotions

Sunday Mass	Weekday Mass	Devotions
Saturday Vigil: 6pm	Mon, Tues, Wed Mass at 9am	Adoration with the Rosary: Saturday 9.30am
Sunday: 9.30 am & 5pm	Thursday - Mass at 7.30pm	Divine Mercy Devotion: Third Sunday at 3pm
Filipino Mass: Third Sunday at 11.15am	Fri & Sat Mass at 9am	Alliance of the 2 Hearts Mass and Devotion: First Friday from 7.30pm
<b>Samoan Mass:</b> First Sunday of even months at 12 noon	<b>Maori Mass:</b> First Sunday at 2pm	

### Contact us

Office Hours: Tuesday-Friday 9.30am-12.30pm

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Parish Priest: Fr. Shane Kelleher OCD

Assistant Priest: Fr "Sam" Ransom Rapirap OCD

Parish Associate: Sr "Jill" Girlie Sudario, CM

## Prayer intentions

**For the sick & homebound:** Kevin Cloran, Robert Yap, Les Portikiewicz, Karen Browne, Amanda & John Meredith, Reg Gardner, Phyllis Cooper, Sr Heather Burke, Marie & Barry Atkins, Carol & Gabriel Gonzales, Amelia Jimenez, John Ingster, Elizabeth Moore, Greg Watson, Joe Spinnato, Susan Mella, Ron Allen, Sean Finnerty, Rose Levoune, Francisco Carmona, Doris Wahhib, John Kajdrys  
*May they experience the saving power of the risen Lord amidst their pain & affliction.*

**For our recently dearly departed:** Lily Pereira, Marita Waugh, Danilo Mercado, John McDermott

**Those whose anniversaries occur at this time:** Angelito Baterina, Guiseppe Cuomo, Angela Tomarchio  
*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and may perpetual light shine upon them.*



## Our Community: Rosters

18 December	Saturday 6pm	Sunday 9.30am	Sunday 5pm
<b>Welcomers</b>	Myra, Paul & Lori	Tess, Gabriel & Ofa	Betty & Boby
<b>Altar Servers</b>	Michelle & Abigail	Orly & Claire	Robert
<b>Readers</b>	Suzanne & Russell	Allan & Laura	Evangeline & Kavya
<b>Refreshments</b>	Josephine & Glenda	Ofa & Charlotte	
<b>CLOTW</b>		School Holidays	
<b>Flowers</b>	Maria & Estela	<b>Church Vacuuming</b>	Lorraine & Jackie
<b>Counters</b>	Irene, Ruby, Cynthia	<b>Foyer Cleaning</b>	Mafi Family

## Our Community

**Rosters:** The new rosters are now available and have been sent out by email. They are also listed on the website in the ministry section. If you require a paper copy please contact the parish office. If you are not able to attend on your rostered date, you must arrange to swap with another person or put a message on the whatsapp for that ministry. There is a whatsapp group created for the various ministries in our parish. If you need help to connect please reach out for assistance. The purpose of the whatsapp groups is to share information relevant to the particular ministry. Please be respectful and keep the group chats relevant.

Ministry workshops have been happening for new and existing members. Induction, training and support will be offered for new and existing members of the ministries.

- **Readers Ministry meeting** is held on the last Tuesday of each month at 7pm via Zoom.



# Bulletin Notices

**Working with Children:** Various ministries in our Parish involve adults working directly with children; including Altar Servers, Children's Liturgy of the Word, Sacramental Preparation teams, Children's Ministry, namely Choir and Children's Pageant. If you are involved in a ministry that works directly with children it is your responsibility to ensure you have obtained a WWCC and submitted the approval to the parish office before you commence working in your ministry. A WWCC is an ongoing assessment of a person's eligibility to work or volunteer with children. It is a prerequisite for anyone in paid or voluntary child-related work in NSW. The clearance varies from each state and territory in Australia; for NSW it is referred to as a WWCC and is governed by the Office of the Children's Guardian. It involves a national criminal history check and a review of findings of relevant workplace misconduct. More information is available at <https://www.dow.org.au/safeguarding/resources-and-information>.

**Fundraising News:** The fundraising team will be selling raffle tickets after Mass during December. The prizes will be for some hampers. Tickets will cost \$2 each or 3 for \$5. The raffle will be drawn after the pageant on Christmas eve.

**The Family Fun Night** that was postponed in October will be held on Saturday 11 February 2023 at 7pm in the parish hall. Tickets will be available for purchase during January and all those who purchased tickets previously will be contacted to confirm they are able to attend the new date.

**Ordination to the Priesthood of Rev Adalbert Imperial, OCD** will take place on Wednesday 14 December at 7.30 pm in our church followed by supper in the Hall. on Saturday 17 December at 9 am newly ordained Fr Adalbert will celebrate his Mass of Thanksgiving followed by refreshments at the Hall. If you wish to bring a dish to the supper & refreshments please put your name on the list in the foyer or send a message to the parish office or Grace Stagg at 0433 513 654.

**Vinnies News: Please be reminded that all items for the Christmas appeal are due back asap**

**The Vinnies piety stall** has 2023 Columban Calendars, Christmas cards and Advent Reflection books available for sale plus a wide range of religious gifts suitable for all occasions.

**Christmas pageant preparation** will be held every Friday evening at 6pm. Please come along if you wish to join in. Parent and adult support is also needed. **Christmas Carols at Carmel House with the MGL Sisters:**

The MGL Sisters warmly invite you to join us for a family friendly Carols by Candlelight. Bring a picnic dinner and your singing voices for a community night of carols and praise. BYO dinner, BBQ facilities available.

**When:** 6pm Tuesday 20 December

**Where:** Carmel House, 345 St Andrews Rd, Varroville

**RSVP:** 18/12/22 by the facebook event or via text 0402 602 520

**Summer School of Evangelisation—8-15 January 2023: Mt Carmel Retreat Centre:** Summer school is a week long, live in life changing retreat featuring live music, incredible worship, inspiring talks, engaging liturgy, time to chill and learn...and more... in the midst of a community of 150+ young people age 4-16-35. Register by 15 December to receive early bird registration. More info & bookings at [summerschool.org.au](http://summerschool.org.au).

**Social Justice Statement** Speak out about the sinfulness of family and domestic violence and the responsibility of perpetrators to change. <https://socialjustice.catholic.org.au>

**The Journey, Weekly Podcast** On The Journey This Week: Fr Chima Ofor's Gospel reflection – happy those who trust in me. Mother Hilda has a tip for naming when God is in our life. Plus, extra Advent reflections and menALIVE's Stephen Bird on spiritual brotherhood. The Journey podcast available at [www.jcr.org.au](http://www.jcr.org.au).

**A vocation view** Make your hearts firm, because the coming of the Lord is at hand.' Be resolute in following the Lord, whether convenient or difficult. (James 5:8) 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)

**Reconnect this Christmas: An Invitation from Bishop Brian** "Each of us has at least one person in our life that is disconnected from faith. Will you invite them to be with you, with us, this Christmas?" - Bishop Brian  
Perhaps they are a family member - a son or daughter, a sibling, or spouse - or a friend or colleague. You can pray a simple prayer for them (and for yourself!) and then simply ask them, "What are you doing for Christmas this year? Would you like to come to mass with me?"  
Please prayerfully read Bishop Brian's letter and consider, "who is God calling me to reach out to?" <https://bit.ly/bishopchristmas2022>

**An invitation to join electronic parish planned giving from your Parish Finance Council** An electronic regular gift provides many benefits. You will find it a secure, convenient, and efficient way to regularly support your parish, while also reducing our administration costs. It will also help us to confidently forecast and plan, as we know that we can rely on your support. You can increase, decrease, discontinue or restart your monthly gift at any time. Please visit <https://dow.sh/parishgiving> to learn of the four simple ways you can support our parish electronically.

**Formed (Free for DoW Parishioners)** Join hundreds of other families around the Diocese of Wollongong in nurturing your faith at home, in your own time and at your own pace? FORMED.org is a large Faith Formation Resource library website containing thousands of faith formation documentaries, courses, movies, audio and books covering all aspects of our Catholic faith. Materials for both adults and children. Sign-up for Free using our Diocesan Subscription by contacting [darren.mcdowell@dow.org.au](mailto:darren.mcdowell@dow.org.au) or [helen.bennett@dow.org.au](mailto:helen.bennett@dow.org.au)

## Christmas Celebrations

**Parish Reconciliation Service:**  
Friday 16 December at 7.30pm

**Christmas Eve:**

Pageant at 6pm followed by Mass at 7pm

**Midnight Mass**

**Christmas morning at 9.30am**





## Holy Gospel according to Matthew 11: 2-11

*Are you the one who is to come, or must we wait for someone else?*

John in his prison had heard what Christ was doing and he sent his disciples to ask him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or have we got to wait for someone else?' Jesus answered, 'Go back and tell John what you hear and see; the blind see again, and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised to life and the Good News is proclaimed to the poor; and happy is the man who does not lose faith in me.'

As the messengers were leaving, Jesus began to talk to the people about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swaying in the breeze? No? Then what did you go out to see? A man wearing fine clothes? Oh no, those who wear fine clothes are to be found in palaces. Then what did you go out for? To see a prophet? Yes, I tell you, and much more than a prophet: he is the one of whom scripture says: Look, I am going to send my messenger before you; he will prepare your way before you. I tell you solemnly, of all the children born of women, a greater than John the Baptist has never been seen; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he is.'



The Gospel of the Lord.

## Reflection by Pope Francis

On this third Sunday of Advent, known as the Sunday "of joy", the Word of God invites us on the one hand to joy, and on the other hand to the awareness that existence also includes moments of doubt, in which it is difficult to believe. Joy and doubt are both experiences that are part of our lives.

To the explicit invitation to joy of the prophet Isaiah: "The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom" (Is 35: 1), the Gospel opposes the doubt of John the Baptist: "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?". Indeed, the prophet sees beyond the situation; he discouraged people before him: weak hands, trembling knees, lost hearts (cf. Is 35: 3-4). It is the same reality that in every age puts faith to the test.

But the man of God looks beyond, because the Holy Spirit makes his heart feel the power of His promise, and he announces salvation: "Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance". And then everything is transformed: the desert blooms, consolation and joy take possession of the lost of heart, the lame, the blind, the mute are healed. This is what is realized with Jesus: "The blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them".

This description shows us that salvation envelops the whole person and regenerates him. But this new birth, with the joy that accompanies it, always presupposes a death to ourselves and to the sin within us. Hence the call to conversion, which is the basis of the preaching of both the Baptist and Jesus; in particular, it is a question of converting our idea of God. And the time of Advent stimulates us to do this precisely with the question that John the Baptist poses to Jesus: "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?". We think: all his life John waited for the Messiah; his lifestyle, his very body is shaped by this expectation. This is also why Jesus praises him with those words: no one is greater than him among those born of a woman. Yet he too had to convert to Jesus. Like John, we too are called to recognize the face that God chose to assume in Jesus Christ, humble and merciful.

Advent is a time of grace. It tells us that it is not enough to believe in God: it is necessary to purify our faith every day. It is a matter of preparing ourselves to welcome not a fairy-tale character, but the God who challenges us, involves us and before whom a choice is imposed. The Child who lies in the manger has the face of our brothers and sisters most in need, of the poor who are "a privileged part of this mystery; often they are the first to recognize God's presence in our midst" (Apostolic Letter *Admirabile signum*, 6).

May the Virgin Mary help us so that, as we approach Christmas, let us not allow ourselves to be distracted by external things, but make room in our hearts for the One Who has already come and Who wishes to come again to heal our illnesses and to give us His joy.

